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[SIR HUGH MAKES AN EXCHANGE.]

A LIFE AT STAKE.

BY LEON LEWIS.

CHAPTER V.

By my soul, I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Merchant of Venice.

THE morning subsequent to the arrival of the sinister and unwelcome guest of Sir Allyn Dare was bright and sunny, in most perfect contrast with the intense gloom of the preceding night, and gave abundant promise of deepening into one of those bewitching April days that have all the warmth and fragrance of early summer, with added piquancy and freshness.

Seen in the pleasant morning light Edencourt was well worthy of its name.

The mansion, a stately edifice with wide Grecian portico, and extensive wings, was situated upon the summit of a gentle eminence that sloped down upon the one side to the river Thames, which was here a silvery stream worthy its ancient fame. The terrace between the mansion and river was dotted with clumps of majestic trees, and terminated abruptly at the water's edge in a steep bank faced with stone and ornamented with a marble balustrade. A broad flight of marble steps led down to the water and to the boat-houses, of which there were two or three.

Upon the opposite side of the dwelling the eminence descended more gradually into the pretty valley, where nestled the little village of Edenville, with its quaint, pretentious church, in whose vaults reposed the ashes of many generations of the Dares, its two streets crossing each other at right angles with its small, old-fashioned inn. This inn was called The Dare Arms, and its projecting sign bore a weather-beaten and defaced portrait of a warrior in armour, which had been designed as a representation of the original baronet, whose boldness and prowess had

earned for himself and his posterity the surname of Dare.

At the back of the mansion, and extending even beyond the distant village, was the handsome park which crept up to the very edge of the lawn, and half shut out from the view of the occupants of the dwelling the ample orchards, the wide, green pastures, the pleasant meadows, and fertile fields, which went to make up a share of the great wealth of Sir Allyn Dare.

The family of Dare was the great family of the neighbourhood. Half the village and its outlying farms belonged to the baronet, and at his death would belong to his daughter. Although Sir Allyn had for years led a secluded existence, Ild's sunny face was well known to every inhabitant of Edenville. She had been permitted to visit very little, her father having a strange dislike to her forming acquaintances, but she had always a bow and smile of recognition for the more aristocratic householders, and kind words and an open purse for the less fortune-favoured tenants.

These facts were well known to the sinister and unwelcome guest of Sir Allyn, who was the earliest astir at Edencourt upon this morning, and who wandered up and down the wide shaded avenues, through the flower-gardens, and across the terrace to the marble steps that led to the river, his thoughts the while divided between the objects he beheld and their owners, present and prospective.

At length he paused, and leaned with folded arms upon the balustrade, and looked down upon the winding river, which had a solitary look at that early hour; then he turned his head and surveyed the estate of Edencourt, so far as he could see it.

"A splendid home!" he muttered, a satisfied smile breaking over his large round face. "It is fit for a monarch—as fair and grand a home as any in England. Ah! I am the luckiest of men!"

He rubbed his hands together softly, and uttered a noiseless kind of laugh peculiar to him.

"I see but little room for improvement," he continued. "The park is magnificent. The elm avenue that leads up from the lodge shows plainly that it

was planted more than two hundred years ago. But the fir coppice over yonder must be uprooted. I prefer an open meadow there. And these boat-houses must be got in order for summer, which really seems to be at hand. I am fond of boating, and must see to-day if there are any boats fit for my use!"

For some time he stood thus, gazing alternately upon land and river, engaged in pleasant musings, and then, with the air of an owner, he slowly retraced his steps to the dwelling.

He made his way to the drawing-rooms, two handsome apartments thrown into one, with an intervening archway, and here he walked up and down silently, until summoned by a servant to the morning meal.

Following his guide, he was conducted to the breakfast-room.

This was a pleasant room, with a deep window filled full of blossoming plants that diffused a sweet and invigorating odour throughout the apartment. A gilded cage hung in the midst of the mass of floating vines, and its tiny occupant, at the moment of Thervell's appearance, was engaged in pouring forth its morning hymn. There was another window through which might be caught glimpses of shaded dells and sunlit glades in the park, and a full view of the flower-gardens, a portion of which lay before it.

The breakfast-table, glittering with silver and crystal, stood in the centre of the room, and the sunbeams played over its dainty china, turning the polished crystal into fairy-like cups which flashed out a thousand prismatic hues.

By the unencumbered window stood Sir Allyn Dare and his daughter. The former started nervously at sight of his visitor, but came forward to greet him; the latter, as cold and haughty as a young empress, simply inclined her head in acknowledgment of his presence.

The baronet looked more than ever haggard in the sunlight. He had evidently passed a sleepless night, and there were lines about his mouth and eyes that Ild had detected for the first time only a moment before. He was more than ever gentle, but his gentleness was now the unresistance of utter hopelessness.

He forced himself to treat his unwelcome guest with politeness, but sank down in the nearest chair as if unable to support himself any longer.

Ilde quietly glided forward, threw one arm with a protecting movement about her father's neck, and faced the visitor with a species of hauteur that was infinitely becoming to her.

It was not to be wondered at that Therwell returned her look with one of admiration.

Young and slender as she was, there was something queen-like about the baronet's daughter, something regal in her air and manner. It had probably been evoked by her constant guardianship of her parent, the care she had always exercised to win him from his fits of gloom; but this queenliness was so tempered with child-like innocence and sweetness of disposition that it only contributed to perfect her rare character.

She might have been a fairy queen this morning, in her floating robe of white cashmere, her hair rippling in gold-tinted curls over her shoulders, and her magnetic eyes full of gravity and sadness.

She had but just joined her father when Therwell's entrance had disturbed them.

The visitor understood her look and movement, and she smiled carelessly, and said:

"I am happy to see you looking so well this morning, Miss Dare. You are as radiant as the morning itself."

Ilde but faintly acknowledged the compliment. She was tempted to treat him with that coldness and disdain which her feelings prompted, but she dared not do so while the mystery of his presence at Edencourt remained unsolved, or until she knew that her coldness to him would not be sharpening an arrow with which to pierce her father's heart.

But every instinct of her nature raised itself against this man, and her mental attitude towards him from the first was self-defensive and defiant.

If Therwell was aware of this, and there was little that his dull, cold eyes did not see, he appeared not to care. He made a remark about the pleasantness of the room, and the charming indication of a woman's refined taste by the presence of the bird and flowers, and the maiden acknowledged this second compliment as coldly as she had done the first.

By this time Sir Allyn had schooled himself to greater self-possession, and the little party took their seats at the table.

"I understood, Sir Allyn," said the visitor, "that you had a ward—an East Indian young lady."

"You have not been misinformed, Mr. Therwell," responded Ilde, quietly, as he finished his sentence by an expressive glance around the table, "but Miss Arsdale always breakfasts in her own room. Papa and I generally breakfast here alone."

"That must be delightful for Sir Allyn!" declared Therwell, gallantly, affecting not to observe that his complimentary tone was exceedingly distasteful to the young girl. "I appreciate the favour of being admitted to such cosy and exclusive little reunions. I hope, Miss Dare, that you will enjoy my society as much as I shall yours."

His remark seemed to promise a long stay at Edencourt, and Ilde's eyes sought her father's face in surprise.

The baronet did not look up, nor did he evince any sign of having heard the remark, unless his very quietness might have been so interpreted.

Ilde's pale face became troubled and thoughtful, and she heard Therwell's soft tones without comprehending the words they uttered. But she was suddenly aroused from her abstraction when he said:

"You are looking out at the park, Miss Dare. Do you not think it approaches too near to the gardens? I noticed that it quite overshadows several mounds of roses. The nearest clump of trees must be cut down."

The maiden looked at him in surprise, and said, coldly:

"Must be cut down, Mr. Therwell; I scarcely understand you."

"Did I not speak plainly?" asked the visitor, his soft voice full of honeyed sweetness. "I meant to say that I shall cut off this ord of the park, that is the extreme end that overshadows the gardens."

Ilde looked appealingly at her father, but there was no expression except one of weariness in that gentle, downcast face. Thus left alone to battle for him and herself, the colour flashed into her cheeks, her eyes grew luminous with indignation, her lip curled, and she said, haughtily:

"As you have nothing to do with Edencourt, Mr. Therwell, as you are only a stranger and intruder, your modesty in saying what shall or shall not be done upon my father's estate is decidedly astonishing!"

"Ilde," said her father, in a low, pleading tone, without raising his gaze from his plate, "be patient, darling, for my sake."

The indignant flush quitted her fair cheeks, and Ilde, more than ever troubled, set herself to the task of studying this strange, impenetrable visitor.

She might as well have studied the Sphinx—for not more impassive would she have found that calm, sculptured face than she found that of Therwell.

As if unconscious of her scrutiny, the ex-secretary declared his admiration of Edencourt, inquired if the best-houses were furnished with boats, expressed his pleasure when answered in the affirmative, and indulged in a strain of eulogy upon the ancestral home of the Dares.

Ilde felt a vague sense of annoyance at his persistence in talking on this subject, but her father's face brightened, and he looked up with something of hope expressed in his sad eyes.

That hope communicated itself to his sympathising daughter, and her spirits involuntarily lightened.

Sir Allyn seemed desirous of prolonging the repast, as if he dreaded being alone with his visitor, but it was finished at last, and the baronet said:

"Ilde, you look pale and tired. You haven't quitted me for a day or two, and I should like you to go out and enjoy the fresh air this morning."

"But, papa," objected Ilde, coming to his side, and speaking in a whisper, "I cannot leave you alone with him." She glanced at the visitor, who had taken up a morning paper, and appeared absorbed in its perusal.

"You need have no fears, my child," returned Sir Allyn, a flush of hope kindling on his thin cheek. "I think I have discovered a way to manage him. I begin to see my way out of my difficulties."

The maiden looked at her father earnestly, and was encouraged by his sudden hopefulness and energy.

"You are sure you will not need me?" she asked.

"Quite sure, my faithful little darling. Now go and take a good long walk."

He kissed her as he spoke.

Encouraged by the change in his manner, Ilde promised to obey him, and quitted the room with a lighter heart than she had had for a week.

When she vanished, taking with her the warmth and sweetness of the perfumed room, Sir Allyn tremblingly said:

"We will go to my room now, Therwell."

The visitor bowed, laid aside his paper, and followed his host to the room in which they had met on the preceding evening. A bright fire was burning, and Sir Allyn warmed himself before it, feeling every moment an increasing chilliness.

Then he began to walk about restlessly, his mental agitation not permitting him to maintain physical inaction.

"Miss Dare is very beautiful," remarked Therwell, in the blandest manner, as the baronet showed no inclination to speak. "I never saw a lady at once so graceful and so dignified. She looks like a young princess."

That word "dignified," as applied to Ilde, struck a chill to Sir Allyn's heart. Was she dignified and cold—the living sunbeam who had gladdened his weary life, who had warmed and brightened his lonely existence? Had this sunny little being become frozen at heart at last in the cold atmosphere of her home? Had her grief and sympathy for him changed her nature?

He replied to these questions with an involuntary groan.

"She looks the image of her dead mother," said Therwell, his cold eyes scanning Sir Allyn's face. "She has all the spirit of the Dares—the spirit that distinguished her grandfather and aunt."

The baronet was conscious that his heart was laid bare to the keen, careless gaze of his enemy, and he seated himself opposite Therwell at the small round table, taking care to turn aside his face, so that its every change of expression might not be remarked.

His guest waited for him to reply, but as he betrayed no intention of doing so the former said:

"I suppose, Sir Allyn Dare, that you invited me to your room that we might resume our conversation at the point at which we left it last night. Perhaps, however, it may be necessary for me to remind you of the terms of our compact, and the oath you took to fulfil your part in it. Do you remember what a wild, dark night it was on the twenty-second of April ten years ago—how the winds howled around Edencourt, and how in an upper chamber—"

"Stop," commanded the baronet, in a hoarse voice. "I will not hear any allusions to that night from your lips. You know well that I am your victim."

"The world would not look at it in that light," said Therwell, significantly. "But to come to the point. On that night you entered into a bond with me. You agreed to receive me, after the lapse of ten years, as your son-in-law—the husband of your daughter and heiress."

The baronet drooped his head, lower, and still maintained silence.

"I have always looked forward to my alliance with your family, Sir Allyn, and have fitted myself for it. It will be my pleasure to spend a few weeks here, but when I leave Miss Dare must accompany me as Mrs. Vincent Therwell."

"Oh, no, no!" muttered the unhappy father.

"You need not fear parting with her, Sir Allyn," and Therwell's voice was soft and bland, "for my chief residence will be at Edencourt. Oakshaw is only fitted for a temporary abode. I shall be the real master of this place, although you shall be the nominal one. Its revenues shall be dispensed by me, and you will only have to occupy yourself with your books and studies."

It was torture to the baronet to think that his enemy intended to rule over his ancestral home, and that he himself would be only an unwelcome stranger within its walls; but he felt a deeper, deadlier sting at the thought that his only child must be sacrificed to secure his continued safety.

"I shall have a princely home," continued Therwell, with an air of satisfaction. "I have been about the grounds this morning, and find everything improved and beautified since I went away. I have often dreamed of its woods, and plantations, and farms, and the lake—"

"Take them all!" interrupted Sir Allyn, tremblingly, the look of hope that had encouraged his daughter coming back into his face. "Take everything, Therwell, but spare me my child! I will give you Edencourt—the whole estate—and you can find another bride as young and fair as my Ilde."

Therwell shook his head incredulously.

"She is my only child—all I have in the wide world to love!" pleaded the baronet, his heart in his voice. "I would sacrifice everything, my life even, to retain her."

"I know you would!" declared Therwell. "But if she were penniless, instead of being one of the richest heiresses in England, I would not forego my claim upon her. Is it nothing for me, do you think, to throw off the petty trammels of trade and associate with gentlemen? Is it nothing for me to become allied to one of the haughtiest families in the land? Why, however rich I might be, I could never look to an alliance with a lady of higher rank than myself, but for this bond between you and me. I realise my good fortune, and nothing shall induce me to forego it."

"I can never see her your wife," murmured Sir Allyn.

"You thought then when you entered into the compact that I might die before the ten years should have elapsed. You speculated on the many chances that I might die."

The baronet's silence was an assent, and Therwell smiled grimly.

"You may as well resign yourself to the inevitable," he murmured. "I am alive and here. And I cannot be coaxed or bribed to relinquish my claim upon the hand of Miss Dare. Would you brave me?"

"No, not brave you, Therwell," and Sir Allyn trembled at the thought; "but I would forget my pride and appeal to you to remember justice and mercy."

Therwell laughed softly.

"Oh, if I were only dead!" cried the baronet, with a passionate tremor in his voice. "If I had but died years ago!"

"How would your death have benefited your daughter?" demanded the visitor, quietly. "She would have been obliged to marry me just the same, only her motive would then have been to shield your memory and to avert from herself the pity or scorn of the world!"

Sir Allyn shuddered, and bent over the fire, exclaiming:

"Vincent Therwell, is your heart all stone? Be just, and do not press your claim upon us. Take all my wealth and permit Ilde and me to go away from here. I can work for her. Therwell, as you hope for mercy in the final day, leave me my child. Remember my father's kindness to you in your friendless youth."

"Remember how also when I dared forget my station as your father's secretary, and raised my aspirations to your high-born sister, she rebuked my 'insolence,' as she termed it, and called you to chastise me. Remember how you kicked me from her presence—from the presence of the woman I loved—and would have expelled me from the house but for your father's illness. Soon after that he died, and then I went forth. Do you remember all that as I do?" And Therwell's face grew white with the anger that had burned and rankled in his breast for years. "Do you remember the oath I took that your family should yet be allied to mine, although you were so horrified at my presumption in 'insulting' your sister with a declaration of love? I like to recall all this now. I am at

last in a position to enjoy it. Keep on imploring for justice and mercy. Humble yourself to me. Kneel to the low-born secretary, Sir Allyn Dare; but your prayers will do no good. A stone is not harder than my heart, and I love to see you in that humble, beseeching mood!"

The baronet's eyes flashed, his fingers twined themselves nervously, and he looked as though he could have sprung upon his persecutor. But he was conscious that he was powerless to chastise his insolent and overbearing visitor. He knew that every sign of anger on his part was as a sweet morsel to Therwell, and that, struggle as he might, he was in his toils, and every struggle but tightened his bonds.

It was a terrible position for the proud gentleman and loving father, but the compact which united him to Therwell was founded upon a mystery so horrifying and appalling that the sacrifice of his daughter to Vincent Therwell seemed almost light in comparison. "I suppose," said the visitor, thoughtfully, "that there is no chance of Miss Dare's having an interest in another direction?"

"Your spy has doubtless informed you that my daughter has been kept very secluded, and that she has few acquaintances. Her only intimate friend beside myself is my ward."

"I have been told that the young Lord Tressilian, who came into his title a month or so ago, is stopping at Tressilian Hall in the neighbourhood, and that he has visited you frequently since his return from the Continent three or four weeks since."

"His lordship has not seen Miss Dare since his return," declared the baronet, wearily. "His father was my dearest friend as well as nearest neighbour, therefore the young viscount has some affection for me, and I love him as if he were my own son!"

Sir Allyn might have added that there had been a time when it had been the dearest dream of his heart to promote a union between the son of his friend and his daughter.

"Yet Lord Tressilian has never seen Miss Dare?" "Never, since their childhood. They were very fond of each other then." And the father sighed heavily. "It is four years since they met. Since his return I dared not introduce them to each other. They are both young, ardent, and richly endowed in every respect, and I feared—but never mind. They are strangers to each other."

"They have a pleasure in store then. I shall be delighted to make the acquaintance of Lord Tressilian, and to become intimate with him, and I am glad upon my own account that you are a friend of his lordship."

Sir Allyn was upon the point of replying that not even his friendship could bring about "intimate" relations between the aristocratic and highly bred Viscount Tressilian and Vincent Therwell, but a timely sense of caution restrained him.

Therwell, however, read his thoughts. There was something stinging in the voice of Therwell as he said:

"But to return to the subject in which we are most interested. I want it understood that at the end of a month my marriage with your daughter must take place. That allows Miss Dare sufficient time for her preparations. You had better make known to her immediately her inevitable destiny."

"No, no!" interrupted the baronet, shrilly. "Approach her as any suitor might. She will not be likely to refuse you, for her heart is free."

"Nonsense. She must understand from the outset that she cannot exercise any feminine caprices, and that the choice does not lie with her. I can tell her, if you will not. I can see already that she dislikes me, but a few words will break down all her haughtiness!"

"You would not tell her the—the reason of the bond?" gasped Sir Allyn, pale and nerveless.

"That remains to be seen!" responded Therwell, grimly.

The baronet covered his face with his hands, resigned himself to his despair, and his visitor regarded him in silence, yet with a satisfied smile. Thus they awaited the return of Hilda.

CHAPTER VI.

Ladies: She never reprehended him but mildly.
When he demean'd himself rough, rude, and wildly.
Why bear you these rebukes, and answer not?
Adriana:—She did betray me to my own reproach.
Comedy of Errors.

SIR HUGH CHELLIS did not rest until he had discharged, with the money he had so strangely gained, every penny of his indebtedness, including several debts contracted at the gaming-table, and the sums borrowed at different times of the money-lender. It was nearly evening, when, having reserved this visit for the last, he entered the office in which he had been repulsed the day before, and demanded a private interview with the lawyer.

Jacob Jasper was engaged in making out what he had called the Tressilian accounts, but he relinquished the task to his clerk, and led the way to the dingy inner office, with a manner even more frigid than he had employed upon the previous visit of the young baronet.

"Well, Sir Hugh," he said, coldly, after having turned up the gas-light, and placed his back to the fire, in his favourite attitude, "I am sorry to see you here again, especially as I can only repeat my refusal of yesterday. That was my ultimatum; unless, indeed," he added, "Miss Chellis should destroy her latest will and make another in your favour. In that case I might be able to do something."

"Thank you, but I shall not require your services," responded Sir Hugh, with a laughiness he had never before dared to display towards his chief creditor. "I have come to take up these little acknowledgments of my indebtedness to you."

The lawyer stared in astonishment. Was this the young spendthrift who had pleaded only twenty-four hours before for a certain sum to save him from ruin?

"You will be kind enough," continued Sir Hugh, quietly, "to settle with me immediately."

He flung himself carelessly into the arm-chair, and rested his feet upon the fender.

After a puzzled look at his debtor the lawyer proceeded to his safe, unlocked it, and withdrew a small pile of documents tied together with tape. He returned with these to the table, looked over them carefully, and then announced the sum total.

"Three thousand pounds!" repeated the young baronet, the sum looking much larger to him now than it had ever done before. "There it is! Give me a receipt!"

As he spoke he laid upon the table all that remained of his bank-notes, and took up the papers that proved his indebtedness to the lawyer.

He had had over since he had received the money from his mysterious bride a haunting fear that it might prove to be counterfeit. This fear now increased to positive certainty when Jacob Jasper, in his surprise, scrutinized the water-marks and signatures very narrowly. His hands trembled involuntarily, and his face grew pale with suppressed agitation. He was tempted to rush forthwith from the office, and in his heart he anathematized the mysterious lady. It may be imagined then how sweet a sense of relief he experienced when the lawyer politely demanded pardon for his excess of precaution, and proceeded to fill out the desired receipt.

When this was placed in his hands Sir Hugh's first impulse was to lay upon the fire the evidences of his past follies and extravagances. He watched them burn with a strange sensation of relief. When they were quite destroyed he placed his receipt in his purse, and arose to take his departure.

The lawyer arose too, all affability and obsequiousness.

"I suppose Miss Chellis has repented her harshness," he observed, "and has sent you a little present as a token of reconciliation, Sir Hugh?"

"You are, of course, at liberty to suppose what you like."

The expression of the baronet's face, however, informed the lawyer that his supposition was incorrect, and his curiosity became inflamed to a degree that was almost unendurable. But Sir Hugh, if he noticed the fact, cared not to gratify it, and did not prolong his stay.

The lawyer attended him to the outer door, with a servility that was deepened by its contrast with his late coldness, and begged that Sir Hugh would do him the honour to call at any time when a prompt loan would be agreeable.

The young gentleman replied only by a bow, and made his way into the street.

He paused a moment at the window, where, on the previous evening, he had encountered the veiled lady, with possibly a hope that he might see her there again. But a group of street boys were the only persons he beheld, and he walked on, assuring himself that it was highly improbable that he should ever meet her again.

"Well, I'm out of debt," he mused, with a glow of satisfaction. "It's the first time I've been able to say that since I came to London. Out of debt—and out of money too. But I have those diamonds yet to convince me that I have not been dreaming!"

He hastened homeward in an unusually thoughtful mood.

His fashionable chambers had a rather dreary look when he entered them. The newly lighted fire and dim gas-light reminded him of the money-lender's dingy parlour, and he listened to stir up the one and turn on the other until the handsome drawing-room was illumined with radiance, and the blazing fire was reflected several times in the splendid mirrors covering the walls.

But, after all, he thought discontentedly, there

was nothing homelike in this. They were very fine, but they had a look common to bachelors' establishments.

Scarcely understanding his own unusual mood, he drew up a sofa to the fire and threw himself carelessly upon it, placing under his head the ample cushions.

"Well, here I am," he said to himself, with a seriousness he had never before known, "upon a sort of bridge between my past and my future. My debts are paid. I can go and come now when I like without fear of angry creditors. If my adventures should keep her word I shall be able to run a splendid career, to surround myself with a kind of court, to command every enjoyment I have ever desired. If she has deceived me I can do as I have done before. Now what am I going to do?"

He moved uneasily, as if unable mentally to face the question fairly, and then his fine features became resolute and earnest in their expression.

"It is time I made my decision!" he mused. "I am twenty-three years old. As Aunt Dorothy has often written me, it is time I was forming my character for life. Have I finished sowing my wild oats, and am I going to settle down into the quiet country gentleman my father was?" Everybody loved and respected him. His income sufficed for all his desires. He lived to a good old age. But at the rate I have been spending my energies I shan't last ten years longer. Let me see where I stand."

He looked into the glowing coals as if to read there a clear statement of the facts, and said, slowly:

"I am, without doubt, the husband of a clever adventuress. I dare say I shall never see anything of her promised forty thousand pounds. My future depends upon myself. These friends I have nearly supported have deserted me, or rather have slackened in their friendly attentions since I stated to them my difficulties. Shall I turn to them again? Or shall I go down to Hawk's Nest, look after my tenants, build them model cottages, and cheer the last days of my good Aunt Dorothy, whose displeasure I must own I have richly deserved? Such a life looks dull after the one I have led, but I may find contentment and happiness in it, and those joys I have not found in all my gaiety. Can I live on my twenty-five hundred a year, and extract any pleasure from such a life?"

He debated the question with more earnestness than he had ever before applied to any subject. He recalled all his past gaieties, and contrasted them with life at his country home, but he was obliged to confess that the former had never satisfied his heart, and that the latter might be as bright and pleasant as he chose to make it.

"I suppose," he thought, "that I really have duties to perform towards my tenants. When I took half a dozen young fellows home with me last year I was really ashamed of those tumble-down cottages with their battered old roofs. I remember I called them picturesque, and quoted something or other about thatched cottages, but the money I have foolishly wasted would have made them comfortable. It was my father's wish that I should attend to them, for even in his day they began to be a disgrace to the estate. Yes, I ought to go home; but have I courage enough to leave town and enter upon a life so different?"

After a brief period of farther reflection he decided in the affirmative. He felt sick at heart when he reflected upon his career of folly, and remembered how little true friendship existed for him in the hearts of his so-called friends. He knew that he had only himself to blame for this lack of friendship, for the companions he had chosen had been wild and reckless youths, whose only ground of sympathy with him was their common pursuit of pleasure.

"I will go down to Hawk's Nest!" was his decision. "Aunt Dorothy will think my reform is due to her threat of disinheritance. Let her call me mercenary if she will. I don't care to whom or what she leaves her fortune, but I am resolved to turn my back upon my old life and commence anew. If I don't like it when there," he added, "why I can return!"

His mind now fully made up with regard to his future course, the young baronet began to indulge in speculations respecting his mysterious bride, and whether he should ever hear from her again. He recalled all the stories he had heard or read of adventuresses, and decided in his own mind that she must be a member of that class.

"If she had been respectable she would not have been obliged to propose to a perfect stranger to marry her. What a mystery I have plunged into! Perhaps her diamonds, like fairy gifts, have melted away into dust. Let me see how they look now that my first excitement is over!"

He arose and produced the casket from the cabinet in which he had concealed it.

It was a plain, highly polished ebony box, inlaid

with a delicate wreath of ivory, but the ivory was quite yellow, as if from the effects of time.

There was no indication about the outside of the casket of the name or condition of its owner, and, unlocking and opening it, Sir Hugh surveyed again its contents.

He took up the jewels, moved them backwards and forwards in the light, and marked their flashing radiance with keen admiration.

"I haven't sold myself so cheaply after all, even if I never see her again!" he mused. "How beautiful these brilliants are! It is strange that there is no mark about them to show their ownership."

He observed that they were set in a quaint, old-fashioned style, and then put them back into the casket, the inside of which he carefully examined.

But all investigation was fruitless.

There was no clue to the strange unknown.

"Well," was his conclusion as he locked the box, and restored it to its hiding-place, "if the lady ever takes my name, I shall hear of her. If she don't, I need not trouble myself about her."

He endeavoured to bend his thoughts again to that point at which he had interrupted himself, but a feeling of loneliness and inquietude crept over him, and he at length quitted his apartments and set out to dine at his club-house.

That pleasant resort had never been more brilliant with light and social companionship than on this particular evening, and Sir Hugh had never been in worse spirits to enjoy it. His grave face was instantly remarked, for he had always been one of the gayest and most reckless of the frequenters of the club, and several rallied him on his seriousness, but without effect.

It was already known to his friends that he had paid all his debts, and various rumours were afloat, each bearing some attempt to explain his sudden good fortune. One said that his aunt, who must have been more than a hundred years old, and who was as rich as a Begum, had died, leaving him her fortune. Another said that the aunt had insisted upon his immediate acceptance of a part of the wealth he would inherit at her death. A third declared that Sir Hugh had broken the bank at a private gaming-house well known to him. There were other rumours equally reliable, and each and all had their supporters among the young baronet's friends.

The fact, however, that fortune had smiled upon him, and that he was able to plunge anew into dissipation made him more than ever popular with his clique, and they gathered about him, offering their congratulations, and prophesying pleasures that only a week before would have filled his heart with joyful anticipations.

But he was no longer the thoughtless, reckless boy they had known. His pecuniary troubles had sobered him. He had learned the value of their friendly professions. Added to this was the anxiety he now and then experienced in regard to his unprecedented marriage, and what might come of it—an anxiety that made him serious, in spite of himself. Altogether, he was changed, and he felt the fact, as he strove to respond kindly to the gay salutations poured upon him.

He made no attempt to satisfy the curiosity of anyone, but parried all questionings, merely declaring that Miss Chellis was not dead. He ate his dinner, and soon after left the club-house, returning home.

The next day he received a score of visits, but in his present state of mind they were more than unsatisfactory, and he congratulated himself upon his decision as to his future.

During the three days that were to elapse before hearing again from the mysterious bride Sir Hugh set his affairs in order for his departure into the country. He did not write to announce his return, preferring to surprise his aged relative and his household. His possessions were packed for removal, and everything was ready in good time for his proposed fitting.

Upon the morning of the third day he was seated in his dismantled drawing-room, awaiting some message from his bride. He did not seriously expect to hear from her, having come to conclusions not eminently favourable to her, but he was prepared to keep his share of the mutual agreement. The jewel-box stood at his elbow upon a small table, awaiting its claimant.

He was in a cynical and disappointed mood. His good resolves had not immediately rewarded him with the expected happiness. Still he had by no means relinquished them, and he was planning his career as a good landlord and respectable country gentleman, when he heard a double-knock at the street door.

"It is she!" he thought, springing up. "It is my—my wife!"

He made a grimace at that word, which, with its present associations, was distasteful to him.

He went into the hall and stood at the head

of the stairs to receive with becoming respect the lady who was to bestow upon him a handsome fortune, but instead of his bride it was her maid whom he welcomed.

She was dressed as before, and was even more deeply veiled, so that the disappointed baronet could not obtain the slightest view of her features.

He conducted her into the drawing-room, closed the door, and remarked:

"I hope Lady Chellis is well this morning, Ellen."

The maid started at both the names uttered, and replied in the affirmative.

Sir Hugh observed that she had not now that air of nervousness which had distinguished her mistress and herself on the occasion of the marriage. He noticed too, with regret, that she had come empty-handed.

"I have come for the box, Sir Hugh," she said, moving towards it.

"You doubtless remember the terms upon which you were to claim it?" remarked the young gentleman, drily.

"I do, sir. My lady sent you this in exchange for the jewels," and the maid drew out her pocket-book, and took therefrom a folded slip of paper.

"Some excuse for not paying me, as promised!" thought Sir Hugh, unfolding the paper.

What was his astonishment to find it a certificate of deposit in his name at the Bank of England for the sum of forty-five thousand pounds!

The certificate was unmistakably genuine, and he gave up the key of the box, in a kind of wondering maze.

"Your mistress must be very rich, Ellen," he said as the maid took possession of the casket.

"I suppose there's both richer and poorer," returned the woman, guardedly.

"That isn't much of a clue!" thought Sir Hugh.

He put up the paper that promised him so much ready wealth, and said:

"You seem to be the maid of my—of Lady Chellis, Ellen. No doubt a ten-pound note would be useful to you. I should be happy if you would accept it from me. And you could return the favour, you know, by telling me something about my—my wife!"

He endeavoured to speak carelessly, as if the information he sought were really of very little account, and felt in his pockets for the designated amount.

"Thank you, Sir Hugh, but I don't want your money, and I have nothing to say about my lady," returned the woman, with something of exultant emphasis upon the title of her mistress.

"Did she send me no message—no letter?"

"Nothing but the one you've put in your pocket-book," was the dry response.

The baronet endeavoured to bribe the woman to satisfy his doubts and suspicions by a larger sum, but she was deaf to his entreaties, and in the midst of them glided away with her box.

He made no attempt to follow her, being convinced that the result would be the same as on the former occasion.

Instead of doing that he hastened to the designated bank, and learned that the certificate of deposit was correct in every particular, and that there was placed to his credit the promised sum.

But who had deposited it the officers of the bank either could not or would not reveal.

Disappointed and baffled, he was obliged to content himself with the exasperating little that he knew. He declared to himself that so much mystery could not conceal anything good, and that he was doubtless happier in his ignorance concerning his mysterious bride than he could be by any knowledge of her.

He expressed to himself the hope that she would never have the audacity to assume his name, and returned to his chambers to superintend his removal. Two hours later he quitted town for his home at Hawk's Nest.

(To be continued.)

DECORATION OF WALL-SURFACES.—In some things the walls of Pompeii read us lessons which we should be the better for taking to heart. The sight of any house which has been allowed to go out of repair in an English town is pitiable enough. The crumbling mortar defiles everything, and the walls exhibit wretched strips of paper with the colours faded and the patterns blotted out. After centuries have passed away on centuries, the walls of Pompeian houses are scarcely less firm and beautiful than when their owners lived and moved within them, unconscious of the mischief about to be done by the long-slumbering fires of Vesuvius. It will probably take many a year yet to convince Englishmen that the paper-hanger is not the most fit person to make a home seemly and beautiful, or that a genuine artistic ornamentation of walls may be

within the reach of other than the wealthiest classes. The Pompeians, generally, were not wealthy; and some examples of the purest taste are found in the houses of men whose means were manifestly not great. The beautiful effect produced by the treatment of wall-surfaces is disputed by none; that we should still have but an imperfect knowledge of the means employed to obtain it is much to be regretted. The receipt for making the stucco used by the masons of Pompeii would be a boon to thousands in this country, who long to escape from the dominance of fashions which are none the less absurd because they are old. All that Dr. Dyer can say is that "it seems to have been made of calcined gypsum, or plaster of Paris, mixed with pulverized, but not calcined, stone, and in the more expensive sort with powdered marble." This stucco was spread, apparently, with an instrument like that which is used by our plasterers; and Dr. Dyer adds that "a difference in quality, and an economy in the use of it, are observable, which make it probable that the expense varied greatly, according to the fineness of the material." Vitruvius, it is true, says that the stucco should be always very thickly laid on; but he is probably mistaken, for "on the columns of the oldest temple of Pompeii, the Greek temple, we see a stucco of extreme beauty, harder than stone, and not more than a line in thickness," while the temples of Paestum have received a coat still thinner.

ARTESIAN WELLS IN ALGERIA.

TWENTY-THREE years ago the French colonists of Algeria made their first attempts to sink artesian wells in their newly acquired territory; but, after boring in two places in the province of Oran to a depth of 98 and 176 metres without striking water, attempts were abandoned. In 1856 operations were resumed by the military corps of engineers, and from that date, with two or three exceptions, every boring has succeeded; and at the end of 1864 seventy-five wells were flowing and delivering 4,200,000 litres of water every hour, or 100,000 cubic metres a day. The water is limpid and drinkable, but generally a little brackish.

The effect of such a supply on the social life and industry of the country may be imagined. A village and date-plantations rise up around every well, and the natives, having something to lose, prefer peace to predacity. Thirty-five of the wells are in the Ouled Rir district, which stretches far to the south. The deepest well is 175 metres, the shallowest 29 metres, and the total of all the borings amounts to 6,628 metres. The entire cost, defrayed by a tax on the natives, was 400,000 francs.

Among the material results, we are informed that 150,000 date-trees have been planted in the Ouled Rir district alone, beside fruit-trees of other kinds, and more than 2,000 new gardens have been formed. We may expect that these beneficial operations will be continued, for four boring brigades have been established, all well provided with implements, for the purpose of systematic exploration, and to sink wells in places likely to yield water. Guided by years of experience, their failures are now but few, and year by year their knowledge of the local hydrography, surface and subterranean, becomes more complete.

NEW TOWN AT GOALUNDO.—The government have taken up 1,357 acres of land in the neighbourhood of the proposed Eastern Bengal station at Goalundo, in order to build a new town there for the purpose of establishing a large mart for the interchange of produce and manufactures. Sufficient frontage to the river and station accommodation for the large traffic are to be reserved for the railway.

AN ABSURD IDEA.—How exquisitely absurd to tell a girl that beauty is of no value—dress of no value. Beauty is of value; her whole prospect in life may often depend upon a new gown or a becoming bonnet, and if she has five grains of common sense she will find this out. The great thing is to teach her their just value, and that there must be something better under the bonnet than a pretty face for real happiness. But never sacrifice truth.

CURIOUS BIBLIOMANIAC.—The death is announced of a man who was so devoted an admirer of Cervantes that he spent nearly the whole of his life and a considerable fortune in collecting every addition of "Don Quixote" which has been published in Europe since its first appearance. There were found in the library of this extraordinary man 400 editions of "Don Quixote" in the Spanish language, 168 in French, 200 in English, 87 in Portuguese, 96 in Italian, 70 in German, 4 in Russian, 4 in Greek, 8 in Polish 6 in Danish, 13 in Swedish, and 5 in Latin.



[MRS. HAWKS'S VISIT TO INEZ.]

SWEET ROSES YANGLED.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On their return, as the carriage came to a cross road that led to the Glades, Mrs. Hawks suddenly said:

"We have time enough to call and see how Inez really is. Speak to the driver, my dear, and tell him to turn off towards the Glades. I did think that I would not go there again, but since Inez is ill I must see for myself what is the matter with her."

The order was given, and they soon drew up in front of the desolate-looking old house. Rosa took Bijou in her arms, and assisted Mrs. Hawks to alight and ascend the flight of stone steps leading to the portico.

The hall was deserted, but through the open door of Mr. Lopez's room they saw him in his chair playing with Don. The cat rubbed his glossy fur against his master's breast, put his paws upon his shoulder, and made that purring noise which indicates satisfaction and enjoyment in the feline species.

When he caught sight of the visitors he demurely perched himself upon his master's knee, and furtively eyed the poodle, though he seemed evidently on his good behaviour to-day.

Mr. Lopez seemed surprised at the appearance of his visitors—he had heard the approach of the carriage, but supposed it was only returning from the usual afternoon drive to Newport.

Before he could speak Mrs. Hawks exclaimed:

"There is that spotted monster again, and I know he is only watching an opportunity to pounce upon my poor Bijou again, and tear his eyes out. Cover him over with your handkerchief, Rosa, and shield him in your arms."

Mr. Lopez waved his hand, and suavely said:

"I am happy to see you in my poor house, ladies, and I assure you, Eunice, that you need fear no attack on your pet from Don to-day. He has been asking me to apologize for his rudeness yesterday, and I hope you will forgive him for his inhospitable reception of your poodle when they last met."

"Forgive him indeed, when he scratched my darling Bijou's nose, and the poor creature has not recovered his spirits yet. He—he is trembling with fear now, and I insist that your cat shall be banished from the room while I am here."

With an air of mock resignation Mr. Lopez said:

"Summon Dick to the rescue then, if you please, Miss Gordon. Don is fond of him, and will go with him without resistance. I am really sorry,

Eunice, that our pets are so antagonistic to each other. I am afraid they take their cue from their respective owners, for somehow it always happens that you and I get at cross purposes when we meet."

"If we do it is not my fault. Call Dick, Rosa, and tell him to remove that Don; but don't you trust Bijou out of your own keeping a single moment, even after he's gone. There is no knowing at what moment he may rush back and make an effort to exterminate the darling fellow."

Rosa hastened to obey, and Don, looking very dignified, and a little cross, was taken away in the custody of the coachman. When this was accomplished Mr. Lopez turned to his sister-in-law, and said:

"You came to inquire after Inez, I suppose. After doing all that was in your power to make her miserable you have come to see how well you have succeeded. Well, you will have the satisfaction of finding that your work is pretty well done. Inez is completely broken down; she has not been able to sit up to-day, and Minturn says that she has received a severe mental shock from which she may be a long time recovering."

"I declare this passes all that has gone before," cried Mrs. Hawks, in a rage, for he had spoken so loudly and distinctly that she had perfectly understood him. "You suffered your daughter to form a marriage engagement with a man of whom you know next to nothing, and when he is found out to be unworthy of her you coolly throw the blame on me. The man is a wretch! a male flirt! a deceiver! Inez knows this, yet she is breaking her heart over him."

With perfect coolness Mr. Lopez replied to this outburst:

"The world is filled with people of that stamp, Mrs. Hawks, as you above all women should know. My daughter does not profess to be a phenomenon of wisdom, but she should have sense enough to know that the tale of a jealous rival is not always worthy of belief."

He fixed his black, glittering eyes full on Rosa; but without any appearance of anger she said:

"I understand you perfectly, Mr. Lopez, but all I ask of you is to suspend your judgment till your daughter has heard from her lover. I spoke only for her good, not from any feeling of bitterness on my side. Mr. Fenton is now no more to me than the merest stranger."

"Then, by heaven! why did you come here and poison my daughter's mind against as true a gentleman as lives? I won't believe a word of this non-

sense, and if Inez were as wise as she ought to be she would not either."

In a resigned tone Rosa replied:

"I am willing to rest under this cloud till Mr. Fenton has spoken in his own defence. If he deny what I have asserted, if he can prove that I have slandered him, I am willing to bear the burden of your most bitter anger. Till then I entreat that you will give me credit for harbouring no evil intention towards Miss Lopez by acting as I have done."

With a sneer he was at no pains to conceal he said:

"You are very fair and very winning, no doubt, Miss Gordon; but I have seen women like you before to-day, and, short as our acquaintance has been, I begin to see through you. I believe that while under the influence of opium I yesterday said something to you which I wish to retract to-day. Inez will need no assistance from you in the affair I mentioned, and my offer of an annuity to you for certain services is withdrawn."

"So much the better, sir," was the calm response, "for I had made up my mind to reject your bribe. My dear old friend shall do with her own as pleases her best, without any interference from me. I can excuse what you have said to me to-day, for the expression of your eyes assures me that you are still under the influence of that pernicious drug."

He glared on her, but Mrs. Hawks here broke in; she had vainly watched the motions of the speaker's lips to gain a clue to what was passing between them, but, finding herself baffled, angrily asked:

"What are you saying to each other? and why do you look as if you were ready to fight a duel?"

Rosa spoke close beside her ear in reply:

"Mr. Lopez is only complimenting me on my sharpness in bringing to light the baseness of the man who aspires to become the husband of his daughter."

"By Jove! your coolness beats anything I ever saw," exclaimed Lopez; but luckily at that moment Nora came in, bearing a message from Inez, requesting her aunt to go to her room, and an apology to Miss Gordon for declining to receive her.

Rosa fitted from the apartment, as she had no desire to fight another battle with her ungracious host, and the elder lady followed the girl.

In another moment Mrs. Hawks was standing beside the couch on which her niece reposed, and she was almost startled at the change a few hours had wrought in the fair face of one of whose beauty she was really proud.

Inez was almost as deadly white as the cambrie

wrapper she wore; livid circles were around her eyes, with that expression of restless pain in the dark orbs themselves which proved the truth of the physician's words.

She held out her hand, which was burning with fever, and, with a painful effort to smile, said:

"I am glad to see you, Aunt Eunice. I am, as you see, too ill to rise, but I hope that I shall soon be better."

"Don't try to talk, child, for I can't hear a word you say. Your voice seems to have gone away to nothing. It is very provoking that you should get ill just as I came to Newport; but something is always happening to vex me. I wanted you to be friends with Rosa, for I have taken such a fancy to her that I don't know but it may end in my adopting her."

Inez flushed suddenly, and the expression of surprise and pain that came across her face was easily understood by her aunt, if her words were not. She was too faint to talk with one so deaf as Mrs. Hawks, and, in a sort of apologetic tone, the lady went on, though she plainly saw the annoyance she was giving:

"There is enough and to spare, you know, to provide for you both handsomely, if I should seriously think of such a thing. I haven't quite made up my mind, but I think it fair to tell you that such a thing is possible. My life is so solitary, and this young girl brightens it so much, that I hourly grow fonder of her. What do you think of this scheme of adopting her, eh, Inez?"

"My brain is too confused now to think of anything clearly, aunt. But if you wish to adopt Miss Gordon of course you will do it without reference to what I may think."

Mrs. Hawks did not catch the meaning of her words, but she saw from the face of her niece that she did not receive this unlooked-for announcement without a pang, and she went on:

"I did not expect that you would like it, Inez, but what am I to do? You won't leave your father to come to me, and I must have something to love. Yes, child, it is so, and you need not look so much amazed. I am a human creature, whose heart isn't quite dead yet, and I find it pleasant to have always near me a young girl who, I am sure, is becoming sincerely attached to me for my own sake."

"Poor aunt!" sighed Inez, "cut off from nearly all social enjoyment, as she is, no wonder that she pins her faith to that captivating girl, who does all she can to recommend herself to her. I see that she has already rivalled me, but I won't yet pronounce judgment on her, though I am afraid that self-interest is the basis of all Miss Gordon's pretended affection for this poor, deceived old woman."

She made an effort to raise her voice, and said: "You are quite right, Aunt Eunice. I cannot leave my father. My first duty is to him, and my heart also prompts me to remain with him. If this young lady can fill the void in your life I shall be glad to know that you have attached yourself to her. She seems a brilliant and fascinating creature."

"Oh! you don't know half her witching ways. She is the best mimic you ever saw, and it would half kill you with laughing to see her take off that fat, pompous Mrs. Bates, who tries to be a fine lady without exactly knowing what is expected of her in that character. It is the richest thing I ever saw. Mrs. Bates is a most absurd person, and Rosa can hit off her peculiarities to the life."

"Was it not from her that Miss Gordon received her recommendation to you, aunt?" asked Inez, significantly.

"Oh! well—yes; but it was only on account of her intimacy with the daughter. She is not bound to spare Mamma Bates, you know, because she is attached to Kitty. She has seen that young swell of a brother too, and it is wonderful with what precision she copied the exquisite. I declare, her mimicry is better than any farce I ever saw."

Inez wondered if Mrs. Hawks had no fear that the plastic powers of her attractive companion might be brought into requisition to amuse others at her expense, as she had not scrupled to caricature the friends who had certainly been kind to her; but she feared that her aunt might misinterpret her motives if she pointed out this want of principle in Miss Gordon, and she forbore saying anything more on the subject.

When the theme of Rosa's fascinations was exhausted the visitor arose to depart. She took the hand of Inez in her own, and said:

"Good-bye, child; don't be fretting your heart out about a man that isn't worthy of a thought. I know very well what has brought you down so suddenly, but you'll soon come round again and find a lover as clever as Mr. Godfrey Fenton to console you for his treachery. There—you need not flush up so, and look so keen out of your great black eyes at me. I am only talking common sense, as you will live to find out yet."

She dropped the hot hand, sailed out of the room, and announced to Mr. Lopez her intention to depart immediately.

Rosa had gone out on the portico, where she was trying to establish a truce between the cat and dog. Don walked around and around her, eyeing the poodle she held in her arms with benignant forbearance, but all the girl's blandishments could not coax him to rub his soft fur against her dress, and part as he was accustomed to do around his master.

Mrs. Hawks paused in her exit to say: "Inez is very feverish. I think you had better send for my physician, for I have very little faith in the homoeopathic doctor you employ."

"And let her be poisoned and drugged to death, I suppose," growled the paralytic. "We all have to die some time, but I don't intend to have my fate nor that of my daughter hastened by calomel and quinine, I can tell you. No such horrid doses shall be given to Inez with my consent. She is doing very well. I had my chair wheeled into her room to-day, and sat with her some time. I am perfectly satisfied with the treatment she is under."

"Well, you are easily satisfied in all I have to say; but Inez is your child, and I have no right to interfere about her, though she is my niece. I will bid you good-bye now, but if you were better tempered I should be sorry to leave you alone, and I would offer to stop and play a game of chess with you."

"Pray excuse me, ma'am; we should both insist on beating, and the one that had to surrender would be sure to get in a towering passion, so we had better let the chess alone. I have become quite literary in my tastes of late and read a great deal. And that reminds me of something I wish to say to you. The library at Oaklands is still as your father left it at his death, I believe."

"Yes, the books have been taken care of by the people who occupy a portion of the house. They are paid a small sum every year to dust and air them, but I never go near the place myself. Do you want any books brought from there?"

"If you will be so kind as to give me an order for a few, I shall be very much obliged to you. Mr. Horton had some rare works which are beyond my purse, but I should like very much to read several of them."

"You are perfectly welcome to as much of the learned rubbish as you choose to send for. I will give you an order on Wilkins to allow your messenger to take away as many volumes as you may desire. Do you wish me to write it now?"

"Thank you, if you please. I cannot tell you how much I am indebted to you."

"Oh, it's a mere trifle, so you need not be so very grateful. The library is of little value to me, and I only keep it together because it was collected by my father. I have not much fondness for books at any rate, and none certainly for the learned tomes he delighted in accumulating."

Mr. Lopez opened a portfolio that lay on the table beside him, dipped a pen in the ink, and presented it to Mrs. Hawks. In a few moments the order was written on which, he firmly believed, so much depended. He put it safely away in his pocket-book, and briefly said:

"Thank you, Eunice, I shall remember this kindness, and I hope yet to show you what a grateful return I shall make for it."

He showed the whole of his white teeth when he smiled, and, although she did not understand him, Mrs. Hawks felt that there was some hidden meaning expressed by his words. What it was she did not pause to consider, but entered her carriage, feeling glad to get away from the sombre house and its afflicted inmates.

On their way home Rosa amused her by giving such a laughable travesty of her brother-in-law's manner as was marvellous to behold. By what magic power she made her small teeth assume the menacing appearance of Mr. Lopez Mrs. Hawks could not understand, but she enjoyed the effect produced with considerable zest.

The next best thing to quarrelling with her obnoxious brother-in-law was having him made ridiculous by the unscrupulous young creature who spared neither age nor infirmity in her eager search after food for her satirical talent.

When Mrs. Perkins heard that her mistress had visited the Glades a second time without taking her with her, her wrath waxed warm again; but Rosa smoothed down her ruffled feelings, and brought her into good humour by a few judicious words of flattery, and a made-up message purporting to come from Mr. Lopez and his daughter, to the effect that she would be expected on the following day to visit her nursing.

Rosa took good care that the waiting woman was sent the next day in place of herself to inquire how Inez had passed the night.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE Bates family arrived at Newport, and took possession of the handsome suite of apartments which had been secured for them. They were in a less quiet portion of the house than were the rooms of Mrs. Hawks, but Rosa soon found her way to them with ease, and became almost as much at home in them as in her own chamber.

Her trunks came with Kitty's, and a bribe to the keeper of a linen-closet, which opened into Rosa's room on one side, and into one of the principal corridors on the other, afforded her egress from her apartment without the knowledge of Mrs. Hawks or her waiting woman.

Then commenced the life for which she had so eagerly pined; and she proved that her exuberant vitality was equal to the double strain she imposed upon it. From eleven in the morning till ten at night Rosa devoted herself to her patroness with such increasing success that Mrs. Hawks became almost dotingly fond of her. Dismissed for the night, she sped at once to Kitty's apartment, and with the assistance of her friend's maid completed a rapid and brilliant toilet. By eleven she was ready to join the throng of gay revellers in the ball room, and, chaporoned by the passive Mrs. Bates, she and Kitty made their appearance, usually escorted by some gentleman.

Among her other accomplishments Rosa had been taught to dance with rare grace and skill, and her fine appearance, quick repartee, and daring disregard of conventionalities, soon rendered her a marked person among such petty nonentities, as she called them, who were "content to dwell in decencies for ever."

She was not guilty of anything that was glaringly improper, but she did as she pleased, and her wild and wilful spirits often led her beyond the bounds of prudence.

As Miss Gordon's antecedents were entirely unknown, and she appeared among a set of new aspirants to fashionable notoriety, it was assumed that she was rich, and Kitty did everything in her power to further this delusion, without actually telling falsehoods on the subject.

Why the brilliant belle was never visible except at night was accounted for by her devotion to an afflicted friend, who required all her attention during the day; and touching stories were related of her fondness for her adopted mother, for Rosa chose now to consider herself as the daughter of the poor dupe she was so skillfully bending to her own purposes.

These went far towards excusing the levity of her conduct in public, for it was said that so impulsive and warm-hearted a creature could scarcely be expected to bring her actions down to the commonest test of prudence required from other girls of her age. Such a *rara avis* was not to be judged by common rules, so Miss Gordon was voted charming, piquant, irresistible, even by many of her own sex.

By few could such a *role* have been played as that which was now successfully sustained by Rosa Gordon, for it is rarely such freedom is countenanced in a young unmarried woman.

She became the belle of the season, and when she made her appearance in the ball room other shrines were deserted for this new divinity, who queened it right royally over her vassals. Kitty was charmed with the success she had predicted, and Mrs. Bates looked on in displeased amazement. She was at a loss to understand how this obscure and penniless girl had achieved such a triumph, while her own daughter, who was known to be an heiress, was a mere foil beside her.

Mrs. Bates was annoyed at seeing Kitty so constantly eclipsed, and she hinted to that young lady the expediency of dropping Miss Gordon as an inconvenient appendage to their party, as Kitty had no chance to win admiration while this fantastic and enchanting creature was always by her side to cast her in the shade.

To this Kitty vehemently replied:

"I hope that I do not rightly understand you, mamma. I would not give Rosa up for all the beaux at Newport. I don't wish to be admired. Young men talk more to me now, and ask me to dance often than I care about. I'll tell you one thing, ma, and that is, that if it had not been for Rosa we should never have made our way into so good a circle as we have got into here. Money can't do everything, and my friend's grace and elegance have done more for us here than all my father's wealth could accomplish. That aristocratic Mrs. Logrand, who thinks herself the *crème de la crème*, takes a deep interest in Rosa, and she has actually invited her to visit her next winter. You would not consent to ask her again to our house, and she now has a more fashionable one open to her, if she choose to accept the invitation given her."

"Yes—Mrs. Legrand likes to have fascinating young girls about her to attract gentlemen to her house. She is fond of gay society, and cannot hope to bring it around her by her own charms, so she secures the assistance of younger and fairer women. That is the secret of her interest in Miss Gordon."

"It doesn't matter to us what the source of it is; it is sufficient that an autocrat of fashion has placed the stamp of her approbation upon Rosa. Do not offer to snub the dear girl, ma, because I am sure you will see her a leader in good society before another year is gone."

Mrs. Bates stared, and in a vexed tone said:

"What nonsense you talk, Kitty. If the girl has made a sensation at a watering-place like this, it does not follow that rich boobies are so plentiful as to be picked up by a penniless girl who knows nothing of her own origin. When it comes to marriage the truth must be told, and then the lover would find good cause to retract. Of course when he finds out that she has neither family nor fortune he'll not do it."

"I think there are few men who would attempt such a course with Miss Gordon. She is too lovely and attractive in herself to be deserted because she knows nothing of her family. As to the fortune, I fancy it will not be wanting, for Mrs. Hawks has taken such a fancy to her that she has declared her intention to adopt her, and make a handsome provision for her. She is very rich."

"Good gracious! can this be true? It is evident then that Miss Gordon knows how to play her own game, and I shouldn't wonder if we were all used by her merely as counters. I am afraid that she is a dangerous person, but you are so infatuated with her that it is useless for me to speak of getting rid of her, I suppose."

"Indeed, mamma, you wound me deeply when you speak in such terms of my dearest and best friend. You are unjust to Rosa, because she is prettier and more admired than I am, but I enjoy her success; I had rather see her triumph than do so myself. I never wished to be a belle, nor has nature bestowed on me the requisites for that butterfly state of existence. 'Warranted to wear' is stamped on me, so you must make the best of me as I am."

With a sudden access of affection, Mrs. Bates said: "I wouldn't resign you just as you are for fifty such girls as Rosa Gordon. When the butterfly wings are folded away, all that is charming in her will be gone; but you are, and always will be, my own good and true child. I won't vex you any more about your friend, though I can't approve of many things she does. She doesn't seem to mind my opinion any more than if I were a mere nonentity, although I occupy the responsible position of her chaperon."

"Oh, never mind that, you dear, sensible, good mamma. Rosa is not like other girls, and must not be judged by common rules, but I am certain that she has the deepest respect for you. Tell me now, please, when papa expects to return to Newport."

"Not until the season is nearly over. He was tired to death of the few days I persuaded him to remain when we first came here, and I do not think he will try it again till he is forced to come after us. Are you anxious for him to return?"

"Oh, no, by no means. I only asked because Adolphus has written to me to say that he will be here to-night, and I thought a meeting between him and papa might be rather awkward, after he was ordered away to keep him out of the way of Rosa's fascinations."

"My son coming here in spite of his father's prohibition!" exclaimed Mrs. Bates, in a tragic tone. "Kitty, you know that such a course will only bring Dolly into disgrace with your father. You must have known before of his intention, and I have the pain of discovering that you have both been conspiring to deceive your parents."

Mrs. Bates shed a few tears, and Kitty's conscience loudly accused her; but she thought the end justified the means, so she hastened to soothe her mother's emotions as far as lay in her power. She ended by saying:

"If my brother should fall in love with Rosa papa will not object to her for a daughter-in-law when he knows that she is sure of a handsome portion from Mrs. Hawks, and she looks as if she were a princess."

"All that may be true enough, Kitty, but if she comes among us, she'll expect to rule us. I know she will do it too, for she'll twist your pa and Dolly round her fingers till I shall find myself nobody in my own house. I wish I had never consented to bring her here or to allow her to enter my home."

"Dear mamma," said Kitty, "you know very well that, if Dolly marries, he will have a home of his own; his wife will not interfere with you in any way; and if he should be so fortunate as to win Rosa, I am sure she will be the most dutiful of daughters to you."

Mrs. Bates sighed, and, wiping her eyes, replied:

"You are so infatuated with Miss Gordon that you can see nothing wrong in her. Now, what do you think of her conduct in our private parlour the other night when she mimicked the poor epileptic creature she wheedles every day into believing that she is fond of her? After witnessing that, I am not sure she has not tried her hand on some of us."

"No, no; we are sacred to her, because we are her chosen friends. You see that makes all the difference in the world. And then Rosa only did it to make us laugh when he was yawning so dreadfully, and saying that he couldn't find anything to amuse him."

"So your friend entertained him at the expense of the woman whose bread she eats, and who is expected to leave her a fortune when she dies. It is not right, Kitty; and if Miss Gordon is your second self, I must say so."

"Well, it is very droll, at any rate," said Kitty, laughing at the recollection of the scene, "and Mrs. Hawks will not be the worse for what she will never know. It cannot hurt her in any way to have her peculiarities mimicked, but how Rosa contrives to give her eyes the strange glare of the old lady's I can't comprehend. She would make an unrivalled actress."

"Yes, and I wish with all my heart that she had chosen to go on the stage in place of coming among quiet people to upset all their plans. Your papa and I had settled that Adolphus should marry Ada Pierre."

"What, that vulgar, coarse-looking girl whose father made a fortune out of medicated lozenges? Oh, mamma, haven't we enough money of our own without Dolly making such a match as that? He wouldn't look at Ada Pierre if she were dressed in bank-notes."

"I don't suppose he would if she wore anything as dingy as the most of them are; but if they were turned into point-lace and diamonds perhaps he would not be so fastidious. We are not so rich as the world believes, Kitty, and from some things that fell from your pa when he was here I am afraid he's expecting a crisis or something of that sort that will strain his credit to the utmost. That was one reason why he was so anxious to get back. But you are not to breathe a word of this for the world."

Kitty looked aghast, and she huskily replied: "Of course I shall say nothing about it, but I wish you had not told me just now."

"I thought it best to tell you; and now that we are talking in confidence I may as well say to you that if you can like Tom Lorimer well enough to accept him, you had better do so out of hand before anything can happen. His money might help your father out of his difficulties."

Kitty became pale, and then red. After an agitated pause she said:

"I hope that you are mistaken, mamma, about papa's need of such assistance. But even if you are not, I cannot say yes to Mr. Lorimer, for I have already refused him."

"Refused him! and for what reason, pray?"

"I can give you two very good ones; one is that I do not love him, and the other is that I like somebody else infinitely better."

"I know who you mean very well, Kitty; but you will never be permitted to throw yourself away on Albert Tomkins, and if you had any spirit you would not wish it yourself. A poor clerk, with nothing but his salary! a magnificent match that would be for you indeed. And you have actually refused Mr. Lorimer without even saying a word to your father and me about it, when you knew too that our hearts were set on the match. Upon my word, the young girls of this generation are too much for me. You—you that I have ever thought an affectionate and dutiful daughter—have gone and ruined your own prospects by refusing the best offer you will ever have! It is more than I can bear."

And Mrs. Bates relapsed into tears. Kitty was much excited, but she controlled her agitation and deprecatingly said:

"Dear mamma, don't blame me too severely; but what could I do but refuse him? Mr. Lorimer is such a goose that he is always doing some absurd thing to make himself talked of. He never has anything more striking to say than some comment on the weather, or the last quadrille; and although I am not very bright myself, I can see his deficiencies. I don't think poor Tom has an idea above a good-fitting suit of clothes, or a stylish necktie. Oh! no, ma, I am too keenly alive to his defects to accept him as a husband. I am in no hurry to get married, and I hope that pa will not really need such assistance as you hinted at just now from anybody. I could not marry Mr. Lorimer under false pretences anyhow, and if he had suspected pa's difficulties I hardly think he would have asked me."

"But he did ask you, and you should have consulted with me before refusing him. As to false pretences, isn't your friend a bundle of them? Isn't

she letting people suppose that she is related to Mrs. Hawks, and the heiress to all her fortune? Why you should insist that I shall not speak the truth about her, when you are so particular about yourself, I cannot understand."

"Rosa and I are so differently situated, mamma, that the same reasoning will not apply to both of us. Besides she can bring to her husband gifts of person and mind that I can lay no claim to. She can induce him to forget any deceit through which he was won, but I could never do that. I am but a homespun piece of furniture, and all the fine varnish you tried to put on me has only brought out the true grain more conspicuously. I know that I am neither handsome nor clever; but I am above envying Rosa because she is both. I love her with all my heart, if she does reign a queen where I am nothing but a rich man's daughter."

"I am afraid that you'll not be the last much longer, unless you or Dolly come to the rescue. His means are tied up with his father's, and unless he marry a girl with money, and that pretty soon too, I am really afraid that Bates & Son will never be able to stand the run your papa said would be sure to be made on the house whenever that horrid crisis comes. He told me about it, that I might understand the necessity of urging you to accept Mr. Lorimer."

"Mamma," said Kitty, with emphasis, "if I were in danger of starving, I hardly think that I could save myself from it by becoming the wife of poor Tom. But we are in no such exigency yet. Papa will weather the storm, as he has others before it, I daresay; Dolly shall win Rosa; and the fortune Mrs. Hawks will give her as her dower will build up the credit of the firm again. I hardly think she will refuse my brother; but if she should, there is still Ada Pierres as a last resort. I remember that she set her cap at Dolly last winter; but he declared that the thought of the lozenges gave him bronchitis. It will be time enough to think of Miss Pierre when other chances have failed. But if Dolly chooses to sell himself for money, I declare I won't."

"Not even to save your papa from ruin?" asked Mrs. Bates, with an attempt at the pathetic. "Oh, Kitty, I believed you so devoted to him that you would do anything to please him."

"I do love the dear old darling with all my heart, but I can't marry a duncie to save his credit. Besides, if Mr. Lorimer had the faintest suspicion of what you have just told me he would withdraw himself. I do not think that his devotion would stand such a test as the loss of my supposed fortune."

"I really believe, Kitty, that you think your only attractions lie in your money. Why should not Mr. Lorimer love you for yourself?"

Kate laughed a little bitterly.

"Tom likes me well enough in his feeble way, I daresay, but such love as his could never satisfy me, mamma, humble as my pretensions are. Why should I not suppose that my reputed fortune is the chief attraction to most of my adorers, when I see scores of girls at every place, far more attractive than I am, who are scarcely looked at because they are known to have no expectations? But pray let us end this discussion, ma, for Dolly will be here very soon now, and I must hurry through my evening toilet to have a good talk with him before Rosa joins us."

Kitty arose to leave the room, but Mrs. Bates stopped her and impressively said:

"You must not hint to your brother what I have told you. If it become necessary for him to be informed of the state of your father's business affairs, he will tell Adolphus himself."

(To be continued.)

TEMPERANCE AND LONGEVITY.—Zenobia Stevens had a lease of ninety-nine years under the Duke of Bolton, and lived it out. When she went herself and gave it up her kind landlord begged her to keep the house during her life; and, offering her a glass of wine, "One, if your Grace pleases," was the prudent reply, "but as I am to ride twelve miles on a young colt these short evenings, I am afraid of being giddy-headed."

THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC.—M. De Quatrefages endeavours to show that the numerous islands of the Pacific Ocean once formed part of a single continent four or five times the size of Europe, and probably annexed to Asia, that by some great convulsion of our globe the plains of this continent sank below the level of the ocean, and that the islands we now see there are but the tops of the mountains intersecting the submerged region. He points out that although each island seems to be peopled by a different tribe, some of which are white, others black or copper-coloured, there is a remarkable analogy of language amongst them all. There is also a great similarity of manners and customs.

THE RED SEA.—The Red Sea loses half an inch of water daily by evaporation during the summer. It is not therefore surprising that in spite of a strong current that sets inwards from the Arabian Sea at the rate of nearly a mile an hour (twenty miles a day) the water at the head or northern part is some two feet lower than at the foot. As the Red Sea is 1,000 miles long the water entering takes fifty days to reach the head, and in doing so loses 25 in. of height.

THE TEST.

FAIR VIEW was a model house of its kind; built on a hill overlooking a wide extent of country, the view extending for miles. The house itself was a palace—a tower on each side, a broad, low colonnade in front, lofty windows, and graceful balconies.

Cicely Willoughby loved the place because it had been her home for years, ever since her father had died, leaving her under the guardianship of his friend Mr. Marshall.

The little room in the east tower had always been hers—the most charming, thoroughly appointed of little rooms; an octagon with a deep bay window, and with a bright green carpet, bright green paper on the wall, and cottage furniture, also of a delicate green.

Cicely had been very happy in this room. Girls are naturally happy, even under the most inauspicious circumstances, but circumstances had been very suspicious to Cicely.

She had lived on quietly at Fair View for ten years now, with scarcely a wish ungratified, perhaps scarcely appreciating the pretty things around her, from the very fact of never having been without them.

It was a beautiful June afternoon when my story opened. Cicely had flung her window wide open, and was gazing between the enchanting prospect without, of which she never wearied, and a desk on which lay a half-finished letter.

She had a happy, bright face, with clear, hazel eyes, bright brown hair, and slender features. Her figure was graceful, elegant and lithe, and there was a bright, charming glow on her face, both in expression and in colour, that would involuntarily attract a stranger to her.

Her room was hung with pictures, and the favourite pictures were decorated with flowers—one, a coloured photograph of Marian Marshall, was framed with pansies, great purple pansies, exactly the shade for that handsome brunette, with the clear, bright colour and red lips.

Cicely was singing to herself; she was never quiet; she seemed to feel it a positive necessity to express herself either in words or action. Her singing was half recitative, and she was evidently thinking of the words.

Finally she closed the desk with an impatient exclamation, and had returned to the window, when she saw a carriage slowly winding up the hill.

"Marian," soliloquized Cicely, and she forthwith made one or two additions to her afternoon toilet, and ran down to meet the carriage as it drove up to the house.

She had a great deal of tact, and a way of illustrating everything she said—her face always wearing, even when in repose, that same happy, radiant look.

Mr. Marshall was with his daughter, and stopped to kiss Cicely on his way into the house. He was a large, portly man, with rather a pompous way of talking.

"I want to see you, Cicely, this afternoon. Will you come to the library after awhile to speak to me?" he said as he left her.

"Oh, I've been bored to death this afternoon, Marian, darling," cried Cicely. "I have been trying to imagine what life would be like without you. Well, who did you see in town? Was it very dusty—are you very tired? You beautiful creature, you look a little tired."

"Tired? Yes—who wouldn't be? That long, stupid drive; and everyone I called to see was in, which was a great bore of course."

The two girls went in together, crossing the broad, handsome hall. With her foot on the lowest stair Cicely remembered Mr. Marshall.

"Oh, I had almost forgotten. Mr. Marshall wanted to speak to me. Wait until I come back, Marian. I don't believe he'll keep me long."

She ran down the hall, and opened the library door. Mr. Marshall sat there, buried in papers, at his own especial table.

"I have come," she said; "but I expect you are busy. Shall I return another time?"

"Not at all. There is no time like the present. Take a seat, my dear. I wished to say something to you about your property."

"I am prepared to hear it. In fact, I rather expected something of the kind. I have not forgotten that I shall be twenty-one next month."

Mr. Marshall cleared his throat, and began to move the papers before him in rather a nervous way.

"The fact is, my dear Cicely, that I have been a good deal embarrassed of late about my own affairs, and yours are, you know, very much involved with them."

"No, I did not know," Cicely said. "However, I am perfectly satisfied that they should be. My confidence in Mr. Marshall's business sagacity is unbounded," and she gave a gleeful little laugh.

Mr. Marshall's embarrassment increased to a painful extent.

"You don't understand these things," he said, "so that it would be foolish and useless in me to go over the thing in detail. However, all that it will be necessary for me to say is that I have been betrayed lately into some very ridiculous, that is to say, very unprofitable investments. They may turn out better than I anticipate at present, but the probabilities are that they will yield little or nothing for some years to come. And—ah—in short, some of your money has been invested in the same way—"

"And I find myself suddenly reduced," said Cicely, with the same light laugh.

"I need scarcely say, Cicely, that so long as you are under my roof you will never feel any difference," said Miss Willoughby's guardian. "I really can say with perfect truth that I make no distinction in my own mind between you and Marian. You and she should, under any circumstances, share and share alike, and at my death—"

"Oh, you dear, foolish old darling!" cried Miss Willoughby, coming to his side and putting her arms around his neck. "Don't worry about it one bit. I have a sovereign contempt for lucre. I am above such sordid considerations—and, by the bye, this may answer as a test of constancy for my gay and gallant lover. Don't be afraid to tell me the worst—see, I bear it like a heroine!" And she took a tragic attitude. "Has half my fortune, or a quarter of my fortune, or all my fortune taken unto itself wings? If I am literally destitute, do you know what I'll do? 'I'll clothe myself in a russet gown'—if I only had one!—and when Harry comes to-night I'll rush frantically to meet him, and throw myself at his feet, and cry aloud, in the language of the poet:

"I am no longer Lady Clare!"

Well, are you never going to tell me? Am I, or am I not any longer Lady Clare?"

"My dear Cicely, I can't exactly give you the figures to-day. Of course you will be obliged to go over all these papers"—and he laid his hand on them—"next month. In the meantime we will hope for the best."

"And in the meantime," said Cicely, actually wheedling the truth out of him, "I am no longer what is popularly called an heiress!"

Mr. Marshall was forced unwillingly to admit that he feared not.

"That is to say in comparison, Cicely, to what I had hoped to have made of your property, had things turned out differently."

"So be it," Cicely replied, and then she kissed him very warmly and went away.

After her usual fashion she ran upstairs singing to herself—the little poem of Tennyson's still ringing in her head.

She hunted up Marian, inspected her purchases, and advised and commented, but said no word to Miss Marshall of what had passed between Mr. Marshall and herself in the library.

Afterwards her "gay and gallant lover" rode up the hill, swung himself off his horse, and strolled into the drawing-room, and struck a note or two on the piano by way of summons. Which summons Cicely speedily obeyed, running downstairs two steps at a time, and waltzing into the room. Mr. Harry Tracy caught both her hands and arrested her summarily.

Cicely had it on the tip of her tongue to tell him then and there that she was "not the Lady Clare," but she refrained, and told him instead that he was a dear, provoking boy, and why had he come so late?

"Oh, business," said Mr. Harry. "I declare I am fairly fagged to-day."

He did not look particularly fagged. He was tall, fine-looking, with a man-of-the-world air—self-possessed, blue eyes, a firm jaw, wavy brown hair, and a moustache which Cicely conceived to be unrivalled for silkiness and luxuriance. He had a pleasing, captivating way with him, and he understood thoroughly well how to make love to his little girl, as he called Cicely.

That evening, walking up and down in front of the house, Cicely began in a jocular way to tell him of her conversation with Mr. Marshall.

"I don't know whether you were aware of it, Harry," she said, "but I was to have been an heiress."

Mr. Tracy had, in truth, been thoroughly aware of this fact. I do not wish to impute motives too glaringly mercenary to the young man, but this knowledge had in the first place had a good deal to do with attracting him towards Cicely. Afterwards he had learned to love her for her own sake—as well as he could.

He received Cicely's communication with a great deal of discomposure, although he did not show it, of course. On the contrary, he assured her, carrying out her own poetical strain, that he should work the harder now, make a rich man of himself, and that then

They two should wail the morrow morn,
And she should still be Lady Clare.

But notwithstanding this he rode home that night quite gloomily.

"It is a confounded nuisance," he said to himself. "And it would be as well to keep a sharp eye on old Marshall. Depend upon it Marshall would come out all right. He was sure to look out for number one. It was a sin and a shame that Cicely's interests should have been so grievously neglected."

Probably if Harry had known the whole truth he would have been still more indignant. In matter of fact, the handsome fortune which had been left to Cicely Willoughby by her father had been, first in one way, then in another, squandered and misapplied. Of the facts in the case Cicely would herself, in all probability, never have been aware, but Mr. Marshall had certainly not proved a very faithful steward. He had not intended to wrong Cicely in the first place—he, perhaps, scarcely thought that he was wronging her when he began to retrieve some false steps of his own by sinking her money in the same way, reconciling his doing so with his conscience by the reflection that by the time Cicely needed her money things would look up. But things had not looked up yet, and the probabilities were that they never would.

Of course when the time came for an examination into the state of affairs by Cicely's other guardian the truth necessarily was exposed to a certain extent, that is to say, Cicely was made to understand that she was no longer a moneyed young lady. Mr. Marshall played a bold part, carried off the thing well, and Cicely's one thought appeared to be to spare him pain.

Mr. Smith, the other executor of Mr. Willoughby's will, might entertain certain suspicions, and in fact even mentioned them casually in his circle of acquaintances, but Mr. Marshall's character would not suffer thereby. Mr. Marshall was a man with whom it was worth one's while to be on good terms. He was a man who stood remarkably well with the world.

Cicely Willoughby had been brought up with the impression that she was to be a rich woman. She was a generous, open-hearted creature, and she had theories of her own, besides, as to what she meant to do with her money when she became of age. She had sundry plans of charity and benevolence on foot which she had fully expected to have carried out. All these things she was now obliged to give up. So much a year she had promised to pay to a mission orphan asylum, so much she meant to give to missions, another sum should go towards the support of a poor girl in whom she was interested.

I can't tell you what a disappointment it was to her—what a bitter heart-burning it caused her to resign herself to the thought that all these things now must either be left undone, or must be accomplished by other hands than hers. But she succeeded in smothering the heart-burnings and the disappointment; but the best part of her victory was in concealing it as well as she did. She was as blithe and light-hearted as ever. Mr. Marshall must not know that she was unhappy because of his mistake. She had christened by this gentle appellation her guardian's shortcomings.

In the meantime she had plans of her own. She was engaged to Harry Tracy, and these plans depended somewhat upon him. But if Harry were not ready to marry yet, why she must begin to think of doing something for her own support.

Mr. Marshall might say what he pleased, and it was very good in him to have told her that he looked upon her as his daughter, but she was not his daughter, and could never be satisfied to be dependant upon him.

She intended first to wait, and see whether Harry had any suggestions to make; if he had not, then she should make her own arrangements and communicate them to Mr. Marshall.

The same summer, however, all her plans were changed by a power higher than hers. She had been so happy all day—Harry had been at Fair View almost the entire afternoon, and towards sunset they had wandered from the house to gather some

flowers for the vases in the parlours. The gardens were teeming with the fragrance of roses, and glowing with their bright colours.

Cicely had gathered a great many, tied them up into bouquets, and finally piled her lap with a great mass she had cut from a large espalier rose growing against the south wall of the garden. She seated herself in an old swing which had been the delight of herself and Marian in their childish days.

Harry Tracy, leaning lazily against the posts of the swing, began swinging her lightly to and fro. "Swing me higher, Harry," Cicely said. "I've almost forgotten how it feels. I remember, when we were children, Marian and I used to try whether we could touch that lowest limb of the oak there. I wonder if I could manage it now? There, a little bit higher! Yes—no—I didn't quite touch that time! Try again, Harry."

The colour had deepened in her cheeks; she was holding herself in, grasping the rope with one hand and clinging with the other arm—her lap still full of roses, and she was holding them up in her dress. She wore no hat, and her lovely hair was dyed with the beautiful sunset glory. Years afterwards, when Harry Tracy was an old man, she haunted his dreams as she looked that afternoon, with her radiant smile, her white dress, and her lap full of roses, showing them around her as she was swung backwards and forwards.

Marian Marshall came to the window and leaned out.

"Take care, Cicely," she said. "You are going very high."

Harry Tracy looked up at the swing as she spoke. It was a very old swing, and had not been used for a long time. To his horror, he saw that the framework was bending and creaking fearfully.

"Oh, heavens!" Marian called out, in a mixed tone of horror and fear. "The beam is giving way—she will fall!"

Harry rushed forward. He would catch Cicely as she was borne past him.

"Jump, Cicely!" he cried, "jump—it's the best thing to do—right into my arms!"

But he had not had time to speak the words before Cicely was violently hurled some distance from him, the woodwork of the swing reeling forward and falling apart. She lay on the ground white and motionless, having uttered but one little cry when she first touched the earth.

Harry picked her up as if she had been a baby and carried her into the house. Marian met him half way, wringing her hands. "Upstairs," she said; "up to her own room." Harry took her to that fresh, green little spot, and he laid her on the bed.

Was that pale creature Cicely? Could it be possible? As he laid her down a slight motion stirred her features, but she did not open her eyes. All the beautiful glow and radiance which had formerly lighted up her face had utterly departed.

She was scarcely alive. The people around her thought that she was too far dead to the outward world to understand what was going on around her, but her sense of hearing seemed to be preternaturally acute. Not a groan, not a sigh escaped her uttered by Marian, Harry or the servants who had gathered around in horrified consternation. She could not utter a word to beg them to stand aside and to cease conjecturing how seriously she was injured. She was too faint and ill to utter a complaint herself—her whole strength seemed to have been swept away at one blow; but when the doctor came, and bent over her, and asked questions and examined her, she lost not a single tone of his voice—not even the low words he spoke to Mr. Marshall as he left the room:

"I have very faint hopes of her recovery."

She did recover, however; that is to say, by slow degrees the colour came back to her cheeks and the words to her lips—she returned from the confines of the kingdom of death, but to a life how changed! She never left her bed again, except to be carried from it to a couch, and that on rare occasions, in another part of the house, most generally in the adjoining room. She had received from that fatal fall a severe spinal injury, from which she could never in all human probability recover. She might live, nevertheless, for years; at first she used almost to pray for death.

Cicely was a great deal alone. She learned by degrees to face her hard lot, and to study how best to bear it. One bitter thought was that she must now relinquish her dreams of independence, and live at Fair View as Mr. Marshall's daughter. She said this to him once, with the tears gathering in her eyes.

"Hush, Cicely," he replied, "never say that to me again. Fair View is as much your home as mine."

Her helplessness wrung from him that tardy semi-confession, although to be sure Cicely only recognized

in it a kind speech, springing from the noblest, most generous impulses.

It was harder work speaking to Harry; and yet week by week she felt more fully that this must be done. His engagement to her must cease to be a drag upon his vigorous, robust life. Under no circumstances could they ever marry—under no circumstances could she ever delude him with so shadowy a fiction as that. She would no longer be a clog upon him; she would tell him so at once.

She was so lovely, so gentle, so utterly lovable when she told him this that Harry Tracy felt most bitterly what he was urged to give up. He refused to accept his release.

"No," he said, "I will wait for years. I will never abandon the hope that these doctors will do something for you yet. I know that they can help you, sooner or later. For my part, I will never marry another woman. I will wait for you, Cicely, until we are both old people—or, marry me now. You can be as happy in my house, at least, and as comfortable as you are at Fair View. Give me the right to take care of you."

Perhaps he was never again in all his life so unselfish and so earnest. He called her his angel—his incentive to well-doing.

"Don't make my self-reproach any harder to bear," he urged. "I shall never forget that I might have saved you on that dreadful day—I shall never forgive myself for my want of care—never, never!"

"I could never consent to be an encumbrance to you in any way, to stand in your light in the least. We shall be friends all the same, the dearest friends—but lovers—oh, Harry, I ought not to think of love now!"

Finally they parted—that is to say, Mr. Tracy yielded the point so far that he agreed to leave her for a year or two; at the end of that time there might be an improvement in her health. He went away, but he wrote her long letters, which, on days when she was more free from pain than usual, Cicely contrived to answer.

Meantime her life went on. There was a hard battle to be fought at first. All her vitality and vivacity and fire to be struggled with and overcome. The very things that had before made up the sunshine of her life were now her chief stumbling-blocks.

As she grew gradually a little stronger she used to long so intensely for one of the old long walks or drives—she would wake up suddenly in the night from a dream of some dancing party, at which she had been the gayest of the gay, and be reminded by the sharp sting of physical pain that this could be only a dream. She used to get so tired sometimes—so unspcakably despondent. Was all her life to be like this?

Gradually Cicely became aware of a secret which under other circumstances, I believe, she would never have learned. I think that invalids grow more acute, more observant. They learn to read character more readily than others whose sphere of operation is wider. Also, perhaps, masks are thrown off in their presence. At least it was so with Cicely Willoughby. It was like talking to one's self, one's better self, one's nobler nature, to unburden one's mind to her. She was so far away from the rest of the world, in that quiet green tower-room of hers.

Cicely had fallen into the habit of giving Marian her letters from Harry to read—at first scarcely noticing the eagerness with which Marian read them, sometimes once or twice over. By degrees, lying there alone so very much, she began to notice this, and to think about it; also to observe that whenever the conversation turned upon Harry, Marian would change colour, and a certain look would come into her face which no other name called there.

After awhile it grew to be a pleasant thought to Cicely that she should, one of these days transfer her own happiness to Marian—the rose would not die after all, it would only be transplanted to another soil. Was this to be her life mission? Was she to grow contented and reconcile herself to living for others? God has plans for us all—His own plans in His own way; and life was, after all, but the preparation for the life to come.

She took this truth home to her heart for the first time fully and entirely when she had once and for ever abandoned her last lingering hope of recovery and her dream of love.

At the end of two years Harry returned. It was very much easier now to cancel her engagement with him. He could see for himself that she would never again be in any way the bright and radiant Cicely who had promised to be his wife.

Somehow too she had become separated from him in some mysterious way. It was a mockery to speak to her of marrying and of giving in marriage. Since they had parted she had travelled as far into one world as he had into another.

Besides which Cicely was very firm. If she cherished any lingering regrets, if she still entertained any selfish, covetous wish that he should remain all in all to her, she gave no sign or token thereof.

Harry Tracy was besides a very practical man. He would have married Cicely and taken care of her, and never by word or deed have confessed such care to be a burden; but, on the other hand, he was by no means a man of very strong feelings to go down to the grave mourning for her sake.

As she had said they were always friends, but when he was not by the side of that pale, sweet face, and that fragile form, he soon found out that he could be happy with something, as he expressed it, more like flesh and blood. Being forced to resign Cicely, he found he could console himself with someone else.

Marian Marshall and he had always been very good friends. He had admired her beauty, of course, as everyone did, and he had liked her, as it was only natural that one should like anyone so honest and true, and he had been amused by her childishness sometimes, and again provoked by some pettish speech or action.

When he first returned he used to linger with her after leaving Cicely, at first to talk about Cicely, to ask her opinion, to have the comfort of talking away his own distress.

But gradually, as he accepted this new condition of things, he spent with Marian more and more time; and they began to ride together, and Marian gradually began to quote Harry upon all occasions, involuntary always, then she would give a sudden, self-reproachful glance at Cicely.

As for Cicely, it was only what she herself planned and wished; at first she was surprised at her coldness, as she called it, when Marian every now and then betrayed her interest in Harry. It was with almost an effort that she encouraged Marian to tell her about her talks and walks with him, and forced herself to be interested and cheerful.

I imagine that she was a very good actress, because Marian by no means suspected that it cost Cicely a single pang to kiss her and to tell her that she hoped she would be very happy, when one day Marian told her that she and Harry were engaged. After all, it was becoming more and more natural to dissociate from Cicely anything like "marrying and giving in marriage."

"I believe you will be very happy," Cicely said. "You know I have all my whole life in which to pray for you and Harry."

That evening Harry and Marian came up together to see Cicely. They had arranged her pillows in such a way that her head was raised rather higher than usual, and she looked wonderfully bright, something of the old glow in her face. She exerted herself to laugh and talk almost like her former self. She was very morbid and sensitive about being looked upon as an invalid. She wanted her room to be just like other rooms. She did not want Harry and Marian to lower their voices when they came to see her, or to feel that they must not talk on everyday subjects. That must be another effort in her life to make as much sunshine as possible around her. But when Marian and Harry went away after a while, and she was by herself, such a lonely feeling came over her, such a blank, desolate feeling! She felt so intensely how lonely and all by herself she was to be all her life.

It was June once more, and the window was open, and she could hear Harry's voice below as he stood talking to Marian. A flood of thoughts came into her mind of how he had once lingered to say good-night to her, how she had once been his earliest and his latest thought, how she had in those days never expected to be so lonely, weak and helpless. Had she entirely lost her place in the world?

No, she had not lost her place in the world. It was not the place she would have chosen for herself, nor the work she would have wished in her happy girlhood, but her life after that was neither vacant nor aimless. That little green room was always a bower of pleasant memories to look back to for everyone who lived at Fair View.

When Marian and Harry were married, and Harry made Fair View his home, they carried all their cares, doubts and perplexities to Cicely Willoughby's over-patient ear. She was never weary of comforting and helping and suggesting. She was so bright, so happy, so cheerful that, when children grew up in the house, Aunt Cicely's room was the sunniest, dearest corner in the house to half a dozen little hearts. I think that her influence was felt in half a dozen lives. Her thoughtful unselfishness, her loving charity, her perfect faith, her quiet, instinctive forbearance, bore fruit a hundredfold.

We do not choose our own destinies. The God who created us leads us by the ways He would we should walk in. In no single respect was Cicely's

life what she desired and expected, but in no other way, I believe, could her character have been so thoroughly strengthened and ennobled.

She endowed no orphan asylum; she educated no needy person; her name headed no list of public charity; she could never be engaged in any scheme of active benevolence. She never had the happiness of knowing that she could claim to be first in anyone's love and affection.

Harry Tracy's sons and daughters called another woman mother, and year by year she laid by and watched his love for Marian deepening and broadening, until it quite eclipsed the memory of his early love, and yet she learned to let all these things go by, to take up others in their stead, and to be happy.

L. K.

VIRGINIA.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MRS. LANDER went up to her room and read the letter through. It brought the blood to her cheek and the old pride into her heart.

"Did he think her everything, and my child as dirt under his feet—and this to a stranger? Well, we shall see how it works now that my girl stands first and foremost. As if his child were the only person worth speaking of. Cora is right. I do feel as if it were not so very wrong—and as if she were born to the place. Isn't one Lander as good as another? Was Amos one whit better than his brother because everything turned to gold for him and iron for my husband? Cora is right—property belongs to those who have the power to hold it. That was the origin of all property; why should the rule be changed now? As for Virginia, she never would have made anything of it all; she has not even the spirit to fight for it. Cora now would have done that, and conquered too. But she must be very, very good to Amos's daughter—that I will insist upon."

In her indignation Mrs. Lander had flung the letter on a table, and was walking up and down the room, strengthening her resolution with thoughts like these, when Eunice opened the door.

"What's the matter now?" she said, in her curt, dry way. "Some high-flying feller has come, so the men tell me, and acts as if he was a going to step all his life. Now I want to know the truth out."

"Yes, a gentleman has come, Eunice—a very fine-looking man indeed. He brought a letter from Amos Lander."

"Amos Lander! Well now, that beats me! Has Amos Lander come to life as well as the rest on 'em? I'm glad on it. Now we shall see who's who!"

"Eunice Hurd, how can you talk so wickedly? Amos wrote the letter before he sailed on that terrible steamer. Of course he's fathoms and fathoms under water."

"Oh, he is, is he? Well, dead men tell no tales—I wish they did. Anyhow, who is this man, and what does he want?"

"He's a gentleman Amos knew abroad, Eunice. I can't stay to tell you any more; my niece will expect me back—I only came here to read the letter. Is my hair all right—does this dress sweep gracefully? Do, for once, be good-natured and tell me. I declare it seems like old times to have company in the house!"

Away Mrs. Lander swept with something of her old spirit and grace, leaving Eunice standing in the middle of the room, struck dumb with astonishment.

"Well!" she ejaculated, "well, this does take me right off my feet. Holty-toity, how we do spread our feathers! That Eliza Lander is enough to tire the patience of Job. This morning she was broken-hearted. Now she's all agog, putting on airs like a girl, and ready to stand by that young serpent to the last. I can see that in her eyes. I wonder what has done all this."

The open letter offered a solution of these doubts. Mrs. Lander, in her haste and excitement, had forgotten it was on the table. Eunice seized it and soon mastered its contents, spelling out the words aloud and making her comments as she went on.

"Oh, yes, his daughter is all in all. Well now, she was a purty creature, and kind as kind could be. Of course Cora was no more to be compared to her than chalk's like cheese—a hateful, stuck-up creature, that hadn't heart enough to be grateful, though Amos Lander did treat her as if she'd been a princess instead of—well now, I mustn't talk about that out loud, if I am alone."

Eunice muttered all this over to herself, then began reading the letter with earnestness, and went on with her comments.

"I didn't think Amos Lander was cute enough to

find out the difference between them two girls. He allays treated 'em so much alike. I saw it clear enough. They didn't seem scarcely a bit alike to me. When nobody else could tell 'em apart I knew which from which by a look of the eye and the bend of the head. That's a thing one isn't always free to swear to, but it satisfies me. Oh! if Mrs. Lander wasn't what she is I'd set things to rights in less 'an twenty-four hours. I wonder if they'll let her see this—poor thing, it's the last line her father ever wrote, I'll be bound. She shall have it—they shan't keep this from her with the rest."

Eunice obeyed this impulse, and took the letter up to Virginia, who was practising her voice in the remote room assigned to her.

"Here, take this and put it in your bosom if you want to keep it," she said, slinging the letter down upon the piano. "It may be a comfort to you, and it mayn't—I don't know, but if anybody in this house has a right to read it you have."

Virginia took the letter and read it through. Eunice stood by and watched her with interest. She saw the colour retreat from that beautiful face as the poor girl recognized the handwriting; then it came back, swelling the delicate blue veins and flushing her whole face, and causing a gush of tears.

"Oh, how he loved me—how he did love me!" she cried, pressing the paper to her lips with mournful rapture. "Eunice, had you given me back every pound my father was worth I should not have been more thankful. Who was the letter written to? How came it in your hands? Be kind, dear Eunice, and tell me all about it."

"The letter was sent to a man that is in the house this minute. He was an old friend of your—of Amos Lander—and I like his looks, what I saw of 'em through the door."

Virginia was reading her father's letter a second time.

"What does he mean? Is it something that relates to me, I wonder?" she thought. "But all the letter is about me. How the gentleman will be disappointed. Whoever will regard me with my father's eyes? Alas! alas! and he is dead! Heaven help me! if I could have gone down in his arms what a mercy it would have been! This great crime would have been spared to Cora, and I should have been so much happier."

"Hope the gentleman won't be disappointed in Mr. Lander's daughter," broke in Eunice. "She's making herself agreeable now, I tell you."

Virginia looked up wonderingly. For the moment she had forgotten that Cora was in the house.

"And will she take my father's friend from me? the man he seems to have loved so dearly?"

"I don't see how you are to help it."

"I will go down and speak to him."

"And what will you tell him? That letter mustn't kick up no row. It isn't the time, and I won't have Mrs. Lander thrown into hysterics if I can help it."

"I will tell him that I am Miss Lander."

"But you won't be particular about the which Miss Lander, will you now, that's a good girl?"

"Have no fear about that—I shall provoke no dispute. But the man who was my father's friend I must and will welcome under my father's roof. It matters very little whether he thinks me the mistress or a guest here. My father wished me to know him, and I will."

"Well, I reckon I'd do purty much the same thing; your—that is, Amos Lander—did intend you to know one another, I'm sure of that from the letter—that is, supposing you are—mercy on me! one does get tangled up so, it's dreadful talking at all!"

Ellen Nolan was sitting in another part of the room writing with such earnestness that she did not heed what was passing near the piano; but she heard Eunice now, and looked up.

"Come here," said Eunice; "tell her not to go down and cause a disturbance."

"But I don't intend to make a disturbance, Eunice."

"Well then, don't go down."

"You are right, Eunice; I will not take any part in the imposition which places me in a false light before this man or any other person. At first I was excited and rash. To present myself in any other character than my own would be to sanction a fraud."

"If the gentleman be worth knowing he will not like you the less because you cannot present yourself as an heiress," said Ellen, in a low voice.

"True, Ellen. I will take no part in his deception."

"That's a good girl! Give out rope—give out rope—if she's wrong, I don't say she is though; but, supposing she's wrong, she'll hang herself at last. Be certain of that."

Eunice went away with these words on her lips, leaving Virginia and her companion together. Virginia gave her father's letter to Ellen.

"He so wanted me to know the gentleman," she said, regretfully. "I have heard him speak of Mr. Brooks a hundred times on the passage, and before that."

"Who is Mr. Brooks, lady?"

"He is a Freachman by birth, the son of a banker who spent his life in London, having gone there when this young gentleman was a lad. My father knew his father, and has always considered the younger Brooks almost as a son. I think there was some unusual friendship between the families while our parents were young men together. At any rate they were firm friends for life."

"Have you ever seen this Mr. Brooks?"

"No; my father said that he had written to invite him here, and seemed to think much of it. He described him to me as good and noble—a man among men. He appeared to wish that I should consider him as a brother."

Ellen read the letter seriously.

"He seems to have some unexplained idea here—some hope only hinted at."

"Oh, they had business together; I think there was some talk about establishing a banking-house in Scotland to co-operate with that in London."

Ellen smiled faintly, but kept her eyes on the letter.

"I think Eunice was right," she said, at last. "Yes, she is right."

Virginia sighed heavily; the oppressive weariness of her most wretched life was beginning to tell upon her. It was hard to turn aside from the closest friend her father had. But that, like the rest, she must give up or enter upon a contest from which humiliation or sure defeat might only follow. For half an hour she walked up and down her room feverish with anxiety. No poor fly in the web of a spider ever felt the thrall of its imprisonment more keenly than she did. She could have given up the property with but little regret. Never having learned the power or value of money, it was of minor importance to her. But to remain under that roof, to live with the woman who had so wronged her, and yet exhibit the slow indignation that crept upon her stronger and stronger every day, was fast growing into a torture.

"What have I done—how have I deserved this treatment?" she cried out at last. "Am I or am I not Amos Lander's child? How can a wise and just Being look on and see such terrible iniquity prosper?"

"Hush, lady! this does not seem like yourself. The Being you speak of hides His own time. Wait patiently."

"And see my patrimony taken from me—know that my father's dearest friend is to be driven from me, and I must live alone. Oh, it is beyond belief—beyond bearing! I must do something, or go mad!"

"No, dear lady, you will not go mad; that is exactly what they want."

Virginia listened angrily. She was indeed out of all patience. The life that Lawyer Stone recommended had become unendurable. Must she wait for ever in that dull agony of living? Shut out from friends—forbidden to make acquaintances through her false position—a prisoner, chained down by circumstances more potent than iron shackles? Better break through it all—give up everything and strike out boldly for a new life.

Ellen looked up as her mistress paced the room to and fro with fire in her eyes and defiance on her lips. "Now," she thought, "not even I could tell her from her cousin. The very tread is alike; with what imperial pride she walks! How the colour rises and trembles in her face. Thank heaven, it cannot last."

That moment Virginia cast herself upon the music-stool, dropped her folded arms on the instrument, and her face fell upon them, half-smothering the burst of tears that shook her from head to foot.

"Oh, it is cruel! it is cruel!" she moaned. "If I only knew how to act."

Ellen's arms were around her in an instant; gentle kisses stirred her hair, and fell upon her neck.

"Be patient—oh, be patient!" whispered that sweet voice. "Heaven is just. Wait and see."

Virginia lifted her head and wiped the hot tears from her eyes.

"Ellen, I—I really think this is jealousy. How foolish. I never saw this gentleman in my life; but the thought that she assumes my place with him hurts me worse than the loss of all this property. There, you see how weak I am!"

Ellen answered with a kiss so fervent that it was far more eloquent than words.

A servant knocked at the door. Miss Lander's compliments—there was a gentleman below who had known Mr. Lander, and would like to see Miss Virginia.

"Say that Miss Lander is not well, and desires to be excused," answered Virginia. "Heaven knows it is the truth," she said as the man closed the door after him. "I have worried myself into a headache, Ellen."

The poor girl laid herself on a couch and quietly wept herself to sleep. Never since her father's death had she been so disturbed.

Ellen went on with her writing, and in a few moments was so absorbed in her subject that she did not hear the long-drawn sighs that came now and then from that dear slumberer on the couch. This power of concentration it was which constituted the strength of Ellen's genius. She literally lived and breathed in the ideal life her mind created.

This it was which gave the girl that untiring industry without which the brightest genius in life must die out in flashes only of poetry and broken efforts at prose.

Those who reach the temple of fame in these latter days must work their way to its very portals, and toil harder and harder after they are reached, for that which is won by toil must be by toil maintained.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CLARENCE BROOKS excused himself from accepting the invitation that Mrs. Lander pressed upon him to take up his quarters at the house. He had left his portmanteau at the little hotel just beyond the station, he said, and would remain there for the present.

He should even then claim hospitality of Mrs. Lander to an unreasonable extent. If he did not really sleep in the house they might expect him there half the time, as he was sure to get terribly weary of his own society. There seemed to be pleasant drives in the neighbourhood, and shooting—he should think there must be shooting. Did Miss Lander ride?

Yes, Cora admitted that she was a tolerable horse-woman, but since they had been in mourning she had scarcely cared even to take the air.

"Oh, that must be remedied," the gentleman said. "He would look up a good saddle-horse. Was the lady provided with one?"

"Oh, yes; two lovely ponies were in the stable—one black as jet, the other white as snow, which Mr. Lander had himself selected for herself and his niece before he went abroad."

By the way Mr. Brooks wanted to know if he was not to have the pleasure of seeing this niece who was so complete a counterpart of the lady before him. He had heard of such resemblances; but really, in this case, could hardly think it possible that two persons so entirely beautiful could exist.

Then it was that Virginia was sent for. There was no possibility of keeping her in the back-ground after this, and Cora submitted with charming grace. Her cousin was a little peculiar sometimes; but, for all that, one of the most interesting characters in the world. Mr. Brooks would be charmed with her—everybody was.

Here the servant came in and received his orders. Mrs. Lander followed him into the hall.

"Tell her she must come, I insist upon it," she whispered. "This gentleman must see our family circle complete."

It was some time since any of the servants had cared much about Mrs. Lander's wishes. They were the first to ascertain who was in fact mistress of the house, and veered round accordingly. Before he had taken three steps this eagerly given message was forgotten.

Meantime Clarence Brooks and Cora were talking near the window, for the gentleman never seemed to weary of looking out upon the soft, rich colouring of the trees.

"Black or white—which should it be? His saddle-horse must match one of the young ladies' ponies. Might he choose at a venture with fair hopes of adopting her colour? Then it should be black."

Cora's eyes sparkled as she lifted them to his face.

"Ah! he had won. Black was her colour. Well, his steed should be coal black and not too large. He did not wish to be overpowering. A ride under those superb trees would be delightful; he was almost tempted to run and procure one at once. A day lost that fine weather would be a misfortune."

Here the servant came in and delivered Virginia's message. Cora shook her head, cast a deprecating glance at her guest, and allowed a gentle sigh to escape her lips.

"It is one of her nervous days," she said. "I am so sorry."

"Is your cousin apt to be nervous?" the gentleman inquired.

"She is a little—a little excitable, as you may see from my father's letter, but a dear, sweet creature. I am so sorry she is ill!"

"Yes, I have great compassion for illness of all kinds. My own experience in that way has been terrible."

"Indeed! and you look so thoroughly well!"

"Yes, you will hardly believe it, but not a year ago the best physicians of the East gave me up for dead. It was when I lay ill of the Syrian fever in Damascus. I must have been in some sort of a trance, for the natives were urgent to have me buried, and even the physicians were about to consent, when I came to life again. It was the crisis of my disorder, and I ran a narrow chance of being buried alive. It isn't a pleasant thing to remember even now, I assure you."

"It must have been terrible! I have heard of such things, but always accepted them with some unbelief," said Mrs. Lander, joining in the conversation. "Were you conscious?"

"Yes; that was the most awful part of it. With every nerve stiffened to iron, and all my senses acutely awake, it was the most exquisite torture to hear those about my bed discussing my funeral. With closed eyes and everything but the brain spell-bound, my hearing became unusually keen. I even heard the rustle of paper two rooms off, when a person I thought I had taken out and carried with me. The sound, to me, was like the shiver of leaves on a breezy day, yet it must have been faint enough, for the man had a light touch."

"Did he leave you?" asked Cora, suddenly interested.

"Yes; but I do not wish to think of that. There might have been extenuating circumstances, and I loved the man so thoroughly that even now it is painful to think ill of him."

Cora could not press the subject beyond this point; but she was seized with an eager desire to learn more, and resolved to question her guest some other time and learn all that there was to know of this singular event.

Two days from this Virginia and Ellen went down to the grove. It was a lovely afternoon, made brighter and more exhilarating by a sharp frost that had brought whole rainbows of colour into the woods the night before.

The roses were all gone now, but many of the bushes were still bright with berries red as coral, and a rich variety of chrysanthemums adorned the lawn and gardens.

"After all, it is a beautiful world," said Virginia, pausing to look about. "One looks at this scene in amazement after being abroad so long. Look at the hills, Ellen—have you genius enough to describe what you see there?"

"Who has?" Ellen replied. "No pen can do it; no pencil can copy it. After all, God is the great artist."

"I am glad the frosts have not been so sudden and sharp, but that there is still sap enough in the leaves to make them vivid. Look here."

Virginia sprang up, snatched at a twig, broke it off with her hand, and held it towards her companion.

"Here is the most perfect green, fringed so vividly with red that each leaf might have been traced with vermilion. No painting was ever half so beautiful. Ah, here comes one falling down from some tree not far off; deep red, veined all over with maroon colour, so dark that it looks black at first. Oh, Ellen, no pen of yours or pencil of mine will ever equal that. Come away, it makes me envious."

"Thankful, rather, dear lady."

"Well, thankful. So I am, Ellen. While heaven surrounds us with so much beauty we ought to be full of gratitude, and so happy. Come, come, let us go down to the grove, the leaves are thick there."

The girls walked on, chatting cheerfully together. Both were young and full of life. No crime or sense of evil-doing touched the conscience of either. This very day was enough to make them happy, spite of their present position—spite of all which overshadowed them.

"I knew where there is a chestnut-tree that must hang full of burs; the frost last night has let the nuts out—suppose we look for them. It makes one feel like a child again to get into the woods. Oh, there is Joshua Hurd coming up the carriage-road with two splendid horses. The white one is a beauty. See how she shakes her mane, and dashes the gravel with her delicate hoof. Oh, Ellen, I should so like to have a gallop."

"I would have one, if I were you, lady. Ask Joshua to saddle that white beauty. Why not?"

Virginia shook her head, but that moment Joshua came up, riding the black horse and leading the other, who curvetted and danced over the gravel like some beautiful child tossing her hair to the wind; the sweeping whiteness of its mane, flowing free, like floss-silk set in motion, gave an air of superb grace to all the creature's movements.

Joshua drew up the black horse and excited the girl's admiration of the creature by his really fine horsemanship.

"Isn't she purty as a blackbird, Miss Ellen? Jest let me lay my hand on your head and she'll whirl round

you like a top; never saw the match of these 'ere two animals for ladies' hosses. Which on 'em do you like best, miss?"

"The white one, I think, Joshua."

"There's gumption," he said, patting the white horse with his great rough hand. "She would have the black one, wanted to know which Mr. Lander bought for his own daughter. I told her black was his choice—no lie neither, but then he chose it for t'other one—and black she would have. Why Snow-ball cost the most! I sarched her out myself, and know all about it. She's yours any way, fer the other pounced on the black 'un like a hawk on a spring chicken. When do you want to ride her, miss?"

"I'm afraid I shouldn't be permitted," said Virginia, speaking to Ellen in an undertone.

"I'd like to know who's going to stop you when Eunice Muri says it's to be done, or while Josh Muri takes care of the hosses? Jest give the order and I'll have her saddle on in no time."

"I will think of it, Joshua, thank you very much—another day will do. Are you sure, old friend, that my—that Mr. Lander bought that horse for me?"

"I'm sure he bought it fer his own child, and jest as sartin that the other one never will ride her. I'd drive a nail under her huff if she was to ask fer her."

"But why, Joshua, if you recognize her as the mistress of this place?" asked Ellen, very quietly.

"Because I ain't a heathen, neither am I the justice of the peace. What belongs to hosses I know all about, and will stand up to like a seer; but property belongs to the courts. I may feel lead to see things going on so, but it is none of my business. Besides, I couldn't go agin my—my old mistress; what she says is right I'm bound to say is right so long as Eunice don't go agin it. But hosses is hosses, and no one touches this white beauty but you, miss; you may depend on that, as sure as you are here."

Joshua rode on after this speech, scattering the gravel right and left as he went.

"That looks well," said Ellen, turning to her mistress.

"It proves that I have one humble friend that I did not count upon," answered Virginia. "Now for the weeds—I long to be in action. Can you climb, Ellen?"

"Me!" said the hunchback, looking mournfully down on her person.

"Oh! forgive me, dear; I am in such spirits today that I talk at random."

"I can pick up chestnuts as fast as anyone," answered Ellen, laughing. "I can run too—come along."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VIRGINIA and Ellen had reached the edge of the woods, and ran like children down a footpath which led to the little summer-house. On the other side of the bridge stood a huge chestnut-tree, heavy with brown buds, opened like stars by the frost.

Some of its branches overhung the bridge, which was now bereft of all its blossoms, which had perished long ago with the first appearance of cold. But quantities of ferns hung about its arches yet, shedding that delicate perfume through the air which only exists after a frost has revealed among their long feathery leaves.

Virginia and Ellen ran along the bridge, laughing joyously as the chestnuts rattled over their heads. Virginia gathered up the skirt of her black dress and began to pick up the nuts, sweeping the beautiful leaves away with her hand as she searched for them.

"Oh! Ellen, I remember doing this so often, when Cora and I were little girls. She was as wild as a bird then, and I loved her—you have no idea how I did love her."

Ellen drew close to her mistress, and, holding out her skirt, exhibited the nuts she had gathered about the bridge.

"So many!" exclaimed her mistress. "Why, Ellen you beat me."

"Come to the bridge, they lie thick among the fern-leaves."

Virginia left her place and ran down to the bridge, over which a great gnarled branch stretched itself horizontally, bristling all over with burs.

"If I had a club, or something to beat them down with," she cried out, "what quantities we might gather. Stay, I can climb up the sides of the bridge and shake the boughs."

"Pray let me do that for you, Miss Lander," said a voice from the summer-house. "You would stand a fair chance of being thrown into the brook below."

Virginia started, dropped down from the side of the bridge, up which she was clambering, and stood there looking thoroughly abashed. Who was there? Who had been listening to them?

"Forgive me, I did not intend to listen," said



[THE TWO PONIES.]

Mr. Clarence Brooks, coming through the door, "but really it is dangerous, Miss Lander, and I must be permitted to help you."

Virginia guessed who it was, and made an effort to resume her tranquillity.

"You are not so angry at this intrusion that you will not bid me good-morning, I hope?" he continued, gaily. "If so I shall regret my good fortune in seeing you again so soon."

He paused all at once, and stood on the bridge regarding the young girl with a puzzled look.

Virginia dropped the skirt of her dress and allowed the chestnuts to fall over the bridge.

"I think—I fancy perhaps that you have mistaken me for my cousin," she said, advancing towards him with her hand extended. "If it is Mr. Clarence Brooks this is the first time that we have met."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, Miss Lander, but the resemblance is so—so very remarkable—yet when I look on your face there is a difference, which one feels rather than sees. Now that I have been so careless or so rude as to force myself upon you pray let me attack this great bough. It would have proved too tough for a lady's management, believe me."

Mr. Brooks sprang upon the parapet of the bridge, and, seizing the huge chestnut branch, shook it with so much vigour that a storm of nuts came rattling over the bridge and splashed into the brook on either side.

Here they went dancing on their way, laughing, chasing, jostling each other, and sending out a ripple of music all the while.

The girls darted backwards and forwards, picking up the nuts in wild glee.

Virginia, all careless of the effect, gathered up her skirt again and dropped nut after nut into it with joyous rapidity. The frills of her white under-skirt fluttered around her daintily clad feet, relieving the general gloom of her dress. Her straw hat, with its knots and streamers of black ribbon, had fallen off, exposing a head of hair that would have driven Titian wild with a wish to paint it exactly as it was done up in a sumptuous coil at the back of the head, and rippling in wavy folds away from the forehead. There certainly was feminine grace and pure guilelessness in this girl which Cora never, in her most amiable moments, could hope to possess.

"She is what Lander describes. They are alike, yet how unlike," thought Clarence Brooks as he grasped the bough for another hard shake. "The heiress has dash, brilliancy, self-possession, but this girl is pure, womanly. How could Lander be so

blind? Even a father's partiality must have seen the difference."

As this thought flashed through his mind Virginia looked up and laughed; the supply of nuts was nearly exhausted on the bridge, but overhead yawned hundreds on hundreds of great clustering burs to which the ripe fruit clung in rich abundance.

"Oh, Mr. Brooks, they are getting scarce here."

The voice was cut short by a tornado rushing from the great chestnut bough, and such a storm of nuts came pattering around her that she cried out for mercy, as well as she could while laughing.

Down he sprang from the side of the bridge and began scattering the gorgeous shower of ripe leaves about with his hands, shaking out the nuts with such perseverance that she soon began to feel oppressed by the weight.

"Come this way and empty your nuts on the summer-house floor; we must not leave these things for the squirrels," said Mr. Brooks. "Take my arm and I will help you up this rough slope. Here we are, with room enough for a dozen bushels. There, now you are free to begin again."

Virginia laughed and dusted her hands, knocking the rosy palms together in childish glee.

"What a quantity! and we so little time about it! Why the old tree must have bushels and bushels on its upper branches. Would you believe it, Mr. Brooks, we used to climb ever so high in that chestnut-tree when we were girls? It was great fun, I can tell you!"

"Suppose I climb it now?"

"Well, if you like it; I'm sure there is no danger. But where is Ellen?—we have run away from her."

"No," he said, "she is among the fern-leaves. What a strange little creature it is."

"Sir," answered Virginia, "she is an angel."

"I shouldn't exactly look for an angel in that form."

"But you would. Her face is splendid when she thinks intensely or feels deeply. To me that girl is beautiful."

"Love makes all things beautiful. It even made your uncle think his daughter more lovely than his niece."

The light left Virginia's face instantaneously, and her eyes filled with a gush of tears, so sudden and impetuous that they startled even his composed nature.

"No, no, he never did. I beg pardon, Mr. Brooks, but upon this subject I am a little sensitive."

He saw that she was trembling all over in the sharp struggle she was making against her tears. Just

then Ellen came up to the summer-house with her contribution of nuts. She saw that Virginia had been crying, and guessed the cause.

"Please not to speak with her about—about Mr. Lander; it breaks her heart to hear him mentioned," she said, in a low voice, that sounded severe to the man, who was feeling like a culprit.

"But instantly her voice changed—she poured her nuts into the general pile and called out, cheerfully:

"There's plenty more, Miss Lander; the fern-leaves under the bridge are thick with them."

Virginia leaned out of the window to hide her tears.

"I will gather no more," she said; "the childish spirit has left me."

"Have I driven it away?" said Brooks, really troubled. "If so, sweet lady, one sob from those lips has been punishment enough."

She met his look with a smile which made the tears sparkle as if they had leaped up from her heart perfect diamonds.

"I am very foolish, and should ask your forgiveness. Now, if you have the nerve for a climb—which is an undertaking, I can tell you from experience—Ellen and I will do the work below; won't we, Ellen?"

"Indeed we will," answered the hunchback.

Mr. Brooks caught a glimpse of her face as she spoke, and admitted in his mind that it was one not easily forgotten, for never in this world did spirit master the material more thoroughly.

"Come then," he said, throwing himself down the acclivity which lifted the summer-house from the bridge. "Now give one leap, and I will help you down."

Ellen came forward first, looked him steadily in the eyes a moment, and said, gently:

"Yes, I can trust you," and sprang into his outstretched arms.

Virginia hesitated one instant, but made her leap, and for one instant the strong man held her in his arms. It was but an instant—still the blood thrilled in his veins and his heart gave a bound that startled him.

"Now," he said, dashing over the bridge, "let us go to work in earnest. I never went a chestnutting before in my life."

"Nor I," said Ellen, kneeling down among the leaves, "but it is pleasant, so pleasant!"

"Indeed it is," he answered, "I shall never forget this day. It is like working out a dream."

"Or a fate," muttered Ellen.

(To be continued.)



[THE OUSTED HEIR OF FORCELLINI.]

THE SOLITAIRE DIAMOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE sunbeams played capriciously over the rippling waters of Il Canale Maggiore, the great thoroughfare of Venice, now turning the shower of spray falling from the gondolier's oar into glittering diamonds, and anon darkening the scene until the water was one bed of dark greenish blue, and the black barges gliding to and fro looked like ghostly barques gliding solemnly through a scene of gloom. But occasionally the fleecy clouds, trooping like snow-white birds across the intense blue of the sky, would drift aside, and a flood of golden radiance transformed all things into brilliancy and beauty. It had been a gala morning for Venice. The doge, in his gilded bucentaur, had led a gay procession through the wave-washed streets, but nearly all the revellers, at this advanced hour of the day, had retired and retreated to their homes.

A number of gondolas, however, were pushing swiftly towards the marble steps of the palazzo Forcellini, and at their head was the barge of the noble descendant of that illustrious house, and he himself, springing lightly from the gondola when the prow touched the landing-place and brought him under the shadow of that massive building, stood waiting for his invited guests, his hat in his white jewelled hand, its long white plume trailing on the marble steps, his fine eyes aglow with youthful gladness, and his moustached lip curled with a gay smile. He was a noble youth, an elegant type of the Venetian patrician. And though there were faint signs of careless habits and a dissipated life, a handsomer face could not be found in all Venice than that of Maurizio Forcellini. He was dressed in rich garments elaborately trimmed and embroidered, their costly texture and fanciful pattern abandoned in latter days to feminine use alone. Everything about his appearance betokened a luxurious taste and unstinted expense. His sword-hilt glittered with gems. The buttons, thickly scattered along sleeve and doublet, were tiny emeralds in golden setting. The collar, down which fell long, curling locks of fair hair, which was the pride and badge of the Forcellinis, was of finest lace, and the cuffs, buttoned again with emeralds, were of the same extravagant material.

"Welcome, good friends! we will finish the day so auspiciously commenced with feast and song. My worthy Patrio had strict orders to prepare a feast surpassing anything which has hitherto graced the

board of a Forcellini. The old wine-vaults shall disgorge generously, for know you not this is my birth-night as well as a gala day?" said the young patrician, in his clear, hilarious tones, as one after another of the gondolas pushed towards the steps and delivered up its occupant.

The young men gathered around him with echoing laughter and gay retort.

"Stay, where is Roderigo Garzoni?" demanded Maurizio as his full dark eye ran over the faces of his merry companions. "Surely, friend and tried comrade that he is, he will not fail me to-night. How can we have our revel and lack his silver-tongued song, his witty sayings? Roderigo, Roderigo, where art thou?"

"It is odd to miss him when you are in sight," observed one of the young Venetians, with a laugh; "you are inseparable. Whenever you appear behold Roderigo Garzoni, like your shadow, is close at hand. In truth, we have sometimes marvelled at it, Forcellini; and some of us have queried, 'Who is this Roderigo Garzoni?' for, by St. Mark, he passes among us solely through your means. Who and what he is none of us has the slightest proof."

"If you have doubts of his worthiness to walk with the proudest of us, Francisco, come to me for settlement," replied Maurizio, with a ring of haughtiness in his voice, as he placed his white jewelled hand significantly to his sword-hilt. "Roderigo is my valued friend, my boon companion. He has brightened all my pleasures, and brought me no disagreeable experience. He has been my guide to show me where to pluck the brightest flowers—to inhale the richest odours, to quaff the most delicious draughts of life. Where is Roderigo now, I ask?"

While he spoke Maurizio Forcellini shook back his curling locks of bronzed gold, and looked about him impatiently.

A servant standing obsequiously at the entrance came forward, hat in hand.

"My Lord Forcellini, I saw the noble gentleman at your gondola window a moment since."

Maurizio turned his smiling eyes towards the craft, and beckoned for his gondolier to row it forward.

"Some new prank. Roderigo will astonish us with some brilliant jest. Ho, laggard! come forth and give your apologies."

Thus importuned, the hitherto unseen occupant of the curtained gondola came forth, evidently with reluctance, although there was a forced smile on his lips.

He was a tall man with powerful limbs and a

stately head, with strongly marked features, an inky black moustache, curled around a pair of thin, resolute lips, and eyes black, lustrous and singularly strange in their expression—one moment soft, tender, bewilderingly fascinating, and then again fierce, wild, almost hateful in their glare. He wore his black hair long, hanging loosely in the Venetian style; and his clothing, though of less costly texture and with less fanciful trimming, was similar to that of Maurizio, whose senior he must have been by a year or two.

He gave a scornful glance at the rest, but a slow, sweet, almost pitying smile was on his face as he turned to his noble and ardent friend.

"I pray you, Maurizio, have me excused for this night. You will not need my poor voice to increase your mirth in the presence of your noble guests. My head is aching. I am sure it will be none the better for the old wine which will flow so freely at your generous board."

"As if thy cool head could not bear the heaviest bumper we shall pledge," laughed the host. "Roderigo, who taught me to drain the flask, afraid of our Forcellini brands? Ho, ho, my friend, you must find a better excuse."

"To be sure!" echoed a dozen merry voices, "that is preposterous. We never saw him faint-hearted at prospect of a revel."

"And this my chosen feast," added Maurizio, reproachfully. "Roderigo, for shame! would you mar the pleasures of this gala day? You who have never yet found a sting for me, though I grasp greedily at blossoming hours; you who have made joy gladder, festivity gayer, revelry even more hilarious for me! I have quaffed flowing nectar always when you were by me; mix not to-night the first drop of bitter."

Roderigo essayed a smile, but it was a ghastly attempt; a grayish pallor settled on his face, and, as if entirely unconscious of the presence of the others, he pressed close to the young man's side, and said, eagerly:

"You have been happy, Maurizio—you have been really and truly happy?"

"Of course I have! S'death! Roderigo, that is an odd question. I am happy now. I find life radiant with beauty, brimming with joys waiting to be plucked, golden and bright as this sunshine streaming over me," answered the young Venetian nobleman, flinging back his graceful head, and lifting his gay, careless eyes to the sky above him.

Even as he spoke a sailing cloud closed in, and shut out the sunbeams, and a cold dark shadow from

the massive carvings of the roof above fell about him.

"It is an omen!" muttered Rodrigo, in the tone of one talking in his sleep.

Maurizio opened his eyes more widely, shrugged his shoulders, and taking his friend's arm led the way into the great hall, rich with antique carving, resplendent with gilding and burnished mirrors.

"Come, let us make sunshine for ourselves as the clouds are churlish," said he, lightly. "Rally thy wandering wits, my Rodrigo, for this must be the most brilliant *fête* I have given yet."

The merry young Venetians followed, and the great hall rang with their gay sallies and boisterous laughter.

Rodrigo, as if glad to escape, retreated from the host's side, and took his stand in a niche guarded by a winged lion carved with matchless skill.

Maurizio, making each one welcome, in his generous, hearty fashion, slipped away to consult a moment with the major-domo.

The latter advanced to meet him with a look of evident embarrassment.

"Oh, noble sir!" exclaimed he, "such a pitiable, such an unforeseen accident has happened!"

"How now?" demanded Maurizio, a little sharply, "after all my charges have you been guilty of neglect?"

"Oh, noble master, spare me your anger. Who could have foreseen it?"

"Speak out like a man; what has happened? Has a band of marauders stormed the palazzo, and cleared it of the feast?"

"Nay; but the chief ornament, the centre dish is ruined!" ejaculated the major-domo, in as piteous a tone as if he announced the loss of a battle. "The great crystal lustre suspended from the centre of the stucco wreath in the banquet-room fell, was broken into a thousand pieces, and destroyed the pyramid and the sugar gondola, about which you charged me so many times."

"The crystal lustre!" ejaculated Maurizio, "why it was fastened there years before my birth, and was a marvel of the early Venetian genius. It is a pity, Patrizio; but it can't be helped. See to the fastenings of the other in the palazzo at once. What if it be another omen!"

"And the sugar gondola which was to astonish the guests," said the major-domo, ruefully; "you don't blame me too much?"

The poor fellow was in the last extremity of distress. Maurizio looked at him kindly, and laughed his own gay laugh again.

"Foolish fellow! have you been fretting yourself for fear of my displeasure? I must be cruel indeed to blame you. I'll be sure to describe the wonderful creation so eloquently that it will have more impression than had the pretty ornament served them with comfits on its river of wine. So cheer up, Patrizio."

"He's the kindest-hearted man in all Venice," whispered Patrizio as his youthful master passed. "He's got a kindly heart; he ought to be doge. I care not if he be wild, and spend his gold like water, there's not a mean or selfish thought ever in his mind."

Meanwhile Maurizio had passed on into the banquet-room, from which every trace of disaster had been removed, excepting the silver hook and chain projecting from the stucco ceiling, devoid of the costly and glittering chandelier, which had been the pride and ornament of many a feast beneath the Forcellini roof. It had been a fairy-like dome of crystal convolutions, delicate and fanciful enough for the work of Arctic gnomes, with swaying pendants of every hue, which when aglow with light seemed like a tangle of rainbows held palpable and real by some mighty spell of enchantment. Maurizio looked up at the space vacated by the costly marvel with grave eyes.

"It is a pity," murmured he; "a chandelier like that is not to be obtained now. It was the dream of a great artist; Cavioni's fame still lingers in Venice. He used the crystal with such wonderful skill, his works are worth their weight in gold—and no more are to be obtained now. Well, that is one other pride of the Forcellini shattered and vanished. Ho, Patrizio! bring one of the chandeliers from the saloon, and seek well to the fastenings."

"It is a mystery now how it happened; I am sure at the last feast it was strong enough to endure for years," sighed Patrizio as he hastened to give the order.

Maurizio's exuberant spirits were somewhat checked, and he walked slowly to and fro to wear away his unwonted gravity ere he returned to his guests. As he passed one of the long windows a gaunt, hollow-eyed face was thrust upon him from the outside.

"Noble master, give from your feast to a starving wretch," wailed a wild voice.

The young patrician stopped abruptly, shuddering at the repulsive face.

At that moment a servant came forward.

"That insolent beggar! We have driven her away a dozen times, but she hides from us and climbs up to these windows as soon as we are out of sight," he said, apologetically. "But we will make sure work of it this time."

"Hold," cried the master, "in heaven's name what would you do? See those gaunt cheeks, those skinny hands! Give her food! open the window, and let her in!"

Despite his repugnance the man obeyed.

The forlorn, miserable wretch relinquished her hold of the railing without, and slipped through the open casement, staring greedily at the heavily laden table.

Maurizio rushed to the table and seized plate after plate, emptying them into her outstretched hands.

Patrizio returning, held up his hands in horror.

"Not those, noble master, not those—they are for the guests. I will bring the creature a basketful from the kitchen; but she is a vile thing, she will abuse your munificence; pray let me attend to her."

"What matter for us? are not our appetites already pampered? and she is starving. Give her warm drinks—and assembly clothing—take care of her, Patrizio. There, poor wretch! take this, and fast."

And Maurizio, speaking fast and swiftly, drew from his pocket large pieces of gold, and thrust them upon the woman, whose wild, wide-open eyes evidently believed him as insane as the honest Patrizio counted him mistaken and foolish.

"Was there ever such a man!" muttered the major-domo as Maurizio hurried away.

And the poor, outcast woman, in her abject misery, echoed the words.

The youthful master was quite himself again when he led his guests to the banquet-room. Never had his laugh rung out merrier and more freely—never had his elastic young spirits risen to such wild gaiety. His frolicsome companions followed his wildest sallies. Only one, Rodrigo Garzoni, sitting in the honoured seat beside him, was grave, restless, and ill at ease.

"Noble comrades, drink with me a toast," cried young Fernando Montellin, when the madness of mirth was at its height. "Here's to our noble host, the favourite of fortune—honour and wealth, and the sweetest joys are showered upon him. But one crowning glory lacks he; here's to the future mistress of Forcellini palazzo. None of us can be so dull as to doubt in what direction the beautiful lady rests this moment."

The clinking glasses and the shouts of applause might well distract his attention, and as Maurizio, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, rose to respond, what marvel he noticed not that one hand which lifted not the glass, that one voice silent, one lip unbathe with the beaded wine? Rodrigo sat by his side still and silent, a dull red spot slowly gathering on his cheek.

"You do well, noble Fernando," said Maurizio, "to breathe not her high name amidst this wild revelry of ours. I thank you kindly for your good wishes, and assure you it will not be fault of mine if another festival of this natal day sees not the fairest lady in Venice here to welcome you!"

A round of noisy applause followed this speech, in the midst of which Maurizio resumed his seat.

Patrizio was waiting at his elbow, and touched his sleeve to draw his master's attention.

"Noble sir, Giorgio Dondini waits without, and though I told him it was an unseasonable hour he declares he must see you on business."

"What, old Giorgio!" echoed Maurizio, gaily; "bring him in, and we will warm his sluggish blood with our generous wine. Sure enough, I had forgotten. I receive my rightful use of the Forcellini estate on this birthday. The rest of the will of my grandfather is to be read to me. By St. Mark! it's odd I have not thought of it before. Bring him in, Patrizio. What say you, comrades? will it not be rare sport to have old Giorgio Dondini at our revel?"

A shout of laughter arose from the wild young men, whose spirits had risen with each succeeding glass of the rich old wine.

"Old Giorgio for ever! Let us ply him with wine, and see if we can quicken his dull wits. Bring hither, good Patrizio, your choicest viands; we'll see that far exceed the old skinflint has generous fare."

The gay revellers rose from the table, and gathered in a group awaiting the expected visitor.

He came presently, ushered in by Patrizio with mock reverence and stately courtesy—an old man, with a long, singularly shaped head, entirely bald, except for two bunches of long white hair, streaming forth just above either dead-looking, colourless ear.

The face was not easily forgotten; the complexion was of that pale, waxy, yellow tint so unnatural, and suggestive of the constant use of opium, rendered more startling in effect by the snowy beard, shaven cleanly from the hollow cheek, but left in a long

pointed tuft at the chin, and twisted fiercely, like a brigand's moustache, above the thin, bloodless lip. This utter absence of life and colour in the countenance was made more weirdly apparent by a pair of burning, glowing, inky black eyes, which peered forth from under the gray eyebrows as if they in themselves absorbed all the life and energy, all the hate, fear and affection in the soul behind them; as if, in fact, they, the eyes, were Giorgio Dondini, rather than the feeble, emaciated frame which bore them.

Turning now towards the gallant figure of the young Venetian patrician who stood up before him—the brilliant flood of light illumining his rich dress, his handsome face, and his fair, golden locks—those weirdly gleaming eyes seemed to grow lurid with mingling hate, rage, and savage exultation.

Even the careless, gay-hearted Maurizio quailed a moment, and Rodrigo Garzoni turned away his head, shuddering.

"I am sorry to mar this gay festival with my dark presence," said Giorgio Dondini, bowing to the right and left, yet with an ironical smile on his thin lips; "yet it is imperative that a certain parchment I bear with me should be read in the presence of this noble gentleman, who is the host to-night, before the day is fairly gone, and there be but few sands left to run until midnight comes. I have sought him twice before, and have not found him, therefore I may be pardoned if I seize this opportunity offered."

"You might have spared yourself this needless apology, honest Giorgio," said Maurizio, coming forward with a kindly smile; "you have a right to enter when you list. I am sorry you have been troubled thus to find me. I had forgotten entirely that this was the day named for the final rendering of my grandfather's will, or I had been ready for your coming."

"Forgotten it! Ho, ho, was there ever such a young man before? Forgotten that this day decided for him whether the great Forcellini fortune was to be his or not," cried out old Giorgio, with a shrill laugh.

Maurizio flushed a little, but did not forbear his kindly courtesy.

"Nay, good master lawyer, I did not fancy that was questioned in the least. Who should inherit the fortune but the sole surviving Forcellini? But come, try a bumper of the Forcellini vintage to oil thy throat ready for the reading."

Old Giorgio took the wine, drank it at one draught, and then looked inquiringly into the host's face.

"Am I to read here? To be sure we need witnesses."

"Yes, now and here. We will not detain you longer than is needful."

"I would like a pen to note down in whose presence the parchment is opened."

"Patrizio, bring the standish, and make a seat for worthy Master Giorgio Dondini," commanded Maurizio.

The old lawyer seated himself in the high-backed chair at the end of the table, which the major-domo had cleared for him; the guests gathered in a group at his right hand. Maurizio stood up before him, the sole occupant of the wide space at his left, until Rodrigo Garzoni came around the whole length of the table, and, carelessly seating himself upon one edge of the board, obtained a position where, if he chose, he could watch the expression of the old man's face, as well as that of the young Forcellini.

In a cold, dry voice the old man began reading the somewhat lengthy and clesly written parchment, going over what Maurizio had already heard before, a careful and elaborate plan for the education and maintenance of one Maurizio Forcellini, grandson of Giovanni Forcellini, noble patrician of Venice; but little heed was paid to the reading, for all knew its drift; how a generous income and noble palace were to be at the youth's disposal, for so many years, until his twenty-second birthday, when the sealed portion of the inner parchment was to be broken open and the remaining codicil of the will made known. The document to be deposited in the public archives for safety under the care of his lawyer, one Giorgio Dondini, who was authorized to produce the parchment at the designated day, that task devolving upon a public official, in case of the death of the said Dondini before the appointed day.

"You see, worthy listeners, noble gentlemen all, that Giorgio Dondini is still living," said the old man, pausing, and looking around him with a fierce, exultant glance. "The keeper of the parchments gave me up this last will and testament of Giovanni Forcellini, with the inner seals unbroken. Bear me witness that they are still undisturbed, and that I break them in your presence—thus!"

He tore asunder the seals, carefully smoothed down the parchment, and from under his white eyebrows Maurizio Forcellini caught an exultant, fiery glare

ere those baleful eyes dropped again to the firm round characters traced on the parchment.

"Furthermore, I, the said testator, Giovanni Forcellini, do declare that it is my will that, if on the twenty-second birthday of the said Maurizio Forcellini, it be found, when his accounts are accurately stated, that he be a single scudi in debt, the whole of the Forcellini property, lands, houses, and gold, shall be taken from him and given over to one Roderigo Garzoni, if so be the said Roderigo be still living, and, in case of his death, I do bequeath all my possessions to the City of Venice. I hold this to be justice, for if the said Maurizio be of prodigal, spendthrift habits he will waste the substance and shame the proud old name of the Forcellinis, and he shall receive no countenance, even at my dead hands. I charge upon whoever is left to execute this will that there be no evasion."

A long, minute detail for the identification of Roderigo Garzoni, with the legal formalities to insure the validity of the will, followed; Maurizio Forcellini heard not a word after the name of the new heir to his ancestral home was mentioned. He had caught the swift look of mutual recognition and understanding passing between the old man and the trusted friend and comrade beyond him.

More than that; swift and vividly had flashed upon him another revelation. Why had he failed to perceive it before? The face of old Giorgio Dondini was, after all, but the countenance of Roderigo Garzoni, weatherbeaten and worn, aged by stinted parsimony, as well as years. There were the same features, and, above all, the same burning eye. What a blind, silly dupe he had been! Who had led him along the flower-strewn path of pleasure, hiding from him all its thousand perils? Who had shown him new and richer—ah, and more expensive enjoyments—day by day? Who had dextrously, with honeyed words and tender looks, lured him onward until he stood now on the very brink of ruin?

Only this one thought surged stinging, like a poisoned gnaw, into his very brain. He had not time now to mourn for lost possessions, to shrink from coming poverty. He could only reel and stagger under this blow. His chaste friend was false—had been willing to plot his ruin—was waiting to rise to prosperity by means of his downfall.

"Noble sir, you have heard. How stands the case with you? Have you any clear idea concerning your pecuniary relations?" demanded the cold voice of Giorgio Dondini. "The appointed executors have investigated. Do you know how matters stand?"

"How should I?" returned Maurizio, turning upon him with a scornful smile, "when it has been part of your conspiracy to train me into habits of careless extravagance and foolish trustfulness? And yet I do not know. I have no doubt you will find me irretrievably involved. Why not? I dreamed not there was occasion for carefulness. I thought this day would see me in safe possession of an ample store. Naught has been left to my charge. I am simply asked for gold, and it was given me. A babe could not have been more free from suspicion of this and. And yet, heaven knows, and this fair company will attest, I have not spent upon myself alone! I have bidden others freely to share my pleasures with me. I have been recklessly foolish, but not sinful."

While he spoke the young patrician drew up his slender figure, and, pointing with his long white finger to the parchment, added:

"Look you, Giorgio Dondini! deceived, ruined, undone as I am, I would not change places before heaven's judgment seat with him who wrote that will, with you who read, or with that doubly dyed villain who steps into my rightful place by his own hypocrisy! Let it pass. I swear to you in the sight of heaven, before these noble witnesses, yonder parchment shall not ruin me! I am a Forcellini still!"

There was a low murmur of indignant sympathy from the young men. Sobered at once by this startling revelation they crowded around Maurizio with outspoken warmth of friendliness.

"It is a shameful imposition! Lay the matter before the council! It is nothing short of a conspiracy!" echoed one and another.

Maurizio stood in their midst, still proud and self-sustained. All his wild thoughtlessness, his boyish recklessness, had dropped away from him as by a miracle. He stood before them, grand in his very ruin, with the dignity of manliness.

"At least there is a chance, though a faint one. You heard the second codicil?" suggested one of the young men.

"I did not hear anything, except that Roderigo Garzoni takes my place here," said Maurizio, still without a glance towards the figure, which seemed like a stony statue, never moving so much as an eyelid, during this excited scene.

A murmur of angry indignation greeted the name. "I told you there was no good in him," says one.

"Let him beware of intruding upon Venetian gentlemen!" echoed a second.

"Read the last codicil again, old man," shouted half a dozen angry voices.

Old Giorgio, from under his white eyebrows, flung them glances like those of a lion at bay. But he took up the parchment and read the few lines under the latest date.

"Be it known to all whom it may concern that I, Giovanni Forcellini, will give to my grandson, the aforesaid Maurizio, one last chance of redeeming his birthright, though little enough will he deserve it, if after my solemn letter of instructions, he be found profligate—burdened with debt, and an alien from his rights. In case his twenty-second birthday finds him in a situation to forfeit his inheritance, according to the aforesaid arrangement, I do will and declare that the whole estate shall be kept in the care of the Venetian Council, delivered neither to Roderigo Garzoni nor to anyone else, until a year and a week has expired from the date of the said twenty-second birthday of Maurizio Forcellini. And if before, or by that time, Maurizio Forcellini has made discovery of the lost Forcellini rubies, then all appertaining to Roderigo Garzoni shall be null and void, and the whole estate and all its possessions shall go with my blessing to my grandson, Maurizio Forcellini, his previous short-comings being forgiven him.

"In witness whereof I put my hand and seal. GIOVANNI FORCELLINI."

"Giorgio Dondini—attest." Maurizio had listened with keen interest now, every faculty strained to detect each shade of meaning. He drew a long breath, and spoke but two sentences.

"A letter of instructions," murmured he, in a tone of keen surprise. "Those mysterious rubies! What a hopeless quest!"

Giorgio Dondini rose to his feet, an evil, sardonic smile on his lips.

"Roderigo Garzoni," said he, "it is due to your interest that this palazzo be securely closed and guarded for the stipulated year. As one of the executors of the will I shall take such movements at once."

"A worthy hint for the absence of myself and my guests," said Maurizio, flushing hot with anger. "Come, comrades, let us away. At least, I may take with me my good sword, though I must leave my mother's portrait."

He turned as he spoke, and made a movement towards the door. This brought him face to face with Roderigo Garzoni.

A look of profound contempt and loathing came over Maurizio's face. The stilette eyelids seemed to feel the withering glance, and suddenly opened.

Roderigo Garzoni looked up, his ghastly face wild with unutterable misery. He stretched out both hands in an imploring gesture, opened his lips and would have spoken; but Giorgio Dondini thrust himself suddenly between.

His pretext was to reach a knife lying on the table, but beneath the meaning look of his fierce eye Roderigo shrank back, dropped his eyes, folded his arms and was lamely silent.

Maurizio passed by him with curling lip, and in a moment more had gained the portal.

He drew a long breath as the cool night air fell upon his fevered forehead—this outcast heir of the proud Forcellini Palace.

"Well," said he, "the bubble has burst! It was bright and beautiful; but I will not be a child to waste idle tears for the inevitable. The omen had its meaning. The sunshine is gone, and the cloud is above me."

A haughty-looking, beautiful maiden was leaning over a stone balustrade, caressing a glossy-winged bird swinging there in his gilded cage. A lover could not have asked for a more charming picture to greet his eager eyes than this which met Maurizio Forcellini's feverish gaze as he passed from the gondola to the narrow avenue leading to the private entrance of the palazzo of one of the patrician families in Venice the next morning. Lady Guiseppina heard his coming, and a swift glance told her who was the intruder, but she coquettishly assumed an unconscious demeanour, and, bending lower to the bird, thrust her white finger tips between the gilded wires, calling him by many a sweet Italian pet name, which, in her silver tones, were doubly musical.

The girl had all the beauties of a true Italian. Her stately form was rounded to the most exquisite grace. Her luxuriant tresses, looped up by a gold chain with quaint crystal pendants, shone with the glossy blackness of a raven's plumage. Her clear, dark cheek was crimsoned with that peachy bloom, richer even than the tint of the rose. Her large, full eyes lacked the fierceness of the expression usual to such intensely black orbs, and were softened to a tender languishing, which, stealing

through the long silky lashes, were pronounced by all Venice irresistible and all-conquering.

Looking up at her, Maurizio felt the keenest pang of any since the revelation of the will.

He stood a moment, silently watching her playful movements, and then, running hastily up a long flight of steps leading to the balcony, he spoke her name in a low, wistful, appealing voice.

"Guiseppina."

She turned quickly with a brilliant smile, and held up her hand playfully.

"Truant! Wherefore have you delayed so long? I looked in vain for you last night."

"I gave a feast, you remember, to the young noblemen."

"Ah, yes; but after the feast was over. Fie upon you! So you were not able to give your mistress her promised serenade. I fear me, Maurizio, that you are wild and reckless. You look pale and haggard from revelry."

"There is no more danger, Lady Guiseppina," answered the young man, bitterly, looking gloomily into her face.

A startled look crept over the magnificent eyes.

"You are not like yourself, Maurizio. Tell me what has happened. You have not done any reckless deed? You have not incurred the displeasure of the council?"

"Nay, not so bad as that yet. But it is woeful and humiliating enough. Then you have heard nothing? I thought, mayhap, your father or your brothers had spared me the task."

The dark eyes were opened wide with amazement now.

She thrust her jewelled hand into a fanciful pocket, belted to her waist by a silken cord with gilded tassels.

"I had forgotten. Fernando sent home a line for me. Berta gave it to me when I was attending to my flowers. I thrust it into my pocket, and there it is."

"Read it, Lady Guiseppina. Receive his counsel and instructions before I speak another word," said the youthful lover, proudly.

Lady Guiseppina's eyes hastily followed the lines. She crumpled the letter in her white fingers as she finished, and looked up nervously.

"It is not true! It cannot be true!" she exclaimed, piteously.

"There is no chance for me to deny it. I have already consulted our ages in law matters. They tell me there is no hope for me, except indeed through that absurd clause concerning the rubies. Of course I cannot find them. All Venice exhausted its skill in the search at the time they were lost. There is no question, Lady Guiseppina, I am cast out from my rightful inheritance. I am as poor as the beggar in the lazzaroni quarters!"

Lady Guiseppina's cheeks had lost their lovely colour. She stood a moment trembling, and then burst into tears.

"It is such ill fortune!" exclaimed she. "Oh, Maurizio, I am so grieved. I shall never like anyone else so well as you."

Maurizio's lip curled with a bitter smile at this tacit admission that the tie which had bound them was dissolved by the loss of his fortune. His aching heart mocked him for cherishing the vain hope that Guiseppina would cling to him through it all.

"There remains little for me to say. I give you back your vows. I wish you all happiness, Guiseppina. Farewell."

He was turning abruptly, but the lady's tremulous, embarrassed voice detained him.

"Wait, Maurizio; take back the betrothal ring. Fernando says I am to give it back to you."

She drew from her slender finger a solid hoop, with a costly solitary diamond, and held it out to him.

Maurizio took it, looked at it scornfully, and said, fiercely, while he raised his hand to dash it from him:

"So perish all memory of cherished dreams!"

But then he checked himself, and, with a low, bitter laugh, added:

"Nay, it is not mine to fling away. It will help defray my creditors' demands. Think of it, Lady Guiseppina—your betrothal ring sold to satisfy a clamorous tailor."

Lady Guiseppina's lovely countenance betrayed her horror and disgust at the very thought.

Maurizio gave a single glance into her face, and turned away, descending the stone steps hastily, and flinging himself into his gondola with wild despair.

"Is anything real?" murmured he, looking around him with gloomy eyes. "But yesterday all things glad and beautiful seemed to wait upon me to brighten and bless my pathway; to-day everything turns to emptiness beneath my touch."

He directed his gondolier to row him to the Forcellini palazzo.

"I will take my last look at it, and then away," murmured Maurizio. "Venice is no longer a home for me. I should go mad to remain amidst scenes which have such power to mock and sting me. I will hie me away from Venice before measures can be taken to prevent my departure. I will bury my old identity and begin a new life. I will be born again in an humbler and safer sphere, from which there can be no downfall."

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

LUCERNE ROOT FOR PAPER.—Successful experiments are said to have been made lately in France on the Lucerne root, which was tried for paper, as well as twine and ropes, some ten years ago. The fibre is strong, and is said to yield 56 per cent. of pulp, or a larger proportion than straw. It is treated in the same way. The paper now produced is described as very soft, white, and beautiful.

THE LIGHTS ON THE EAST COAST OF IRELAND. IMPORTANT CHANGES.

SEVERAL months since a number of the principal merchant captains, trading out of the port of Liverpool, urged upon the Board of Trade the desirability of increasing the lights and buoys on the east coast of Ireland, between Dublin Bay and Carnsore Point. After some delay the Board of Trade sent down to Liverpool some officials connected with the Trinity House, and a committee was at once formed for the purpose of investigating the matter. A large number of witnesses were examined, all of whom were unanimous in their opinions as to the necessity of placing additional lights and buoys on the east coast of Ireland.

In accordance with a motion made in the House of Commons, the correspondence on the subject of "lighting and buoying the Irish coast" has been printed, and from a copy furnished to the Mercantile Marine Service Association of Liverpool, it appears that alterations of the most important nature will be made in the buoyage of the sand banks along the east coast of Ireland, between the Kish and Tuskar Lights, as follows:—On the Kish Bank, the Codling Bank, the India Bank, Arklow Bank, Blackwater Bank, and Long Bank. The most important alterations, however, will take place in the lights. The following changes in the character and position of several of the lights between the Kish Bank Light-vessel and the Tuskar Light, as well as additional lights, will be completed on or about the 10th of October next:

"Codling Bank: A light-vessel will be placed about three miles and a half S.E. by E. from the south end of Codling Bank, from which will be exhibited a red quick revolving light, showing its greatest brilliancy every twenty seconds; this vessel will have three masts and carry a globe, with a half-globe underneath at her mainmast head. Her hull will be painted black, with a white stripe, and the words "Codling Bank" in white letters on her side.

The Wicklow Swath Light-vessel will be removed altogether. The Wicklow Head Light will be changed from a fixed bright light, as at present, to an intermittent bright light, showing alternately ten seconds light and three seconds dark.

The North Arklow Bank light-vessel will be placed about three miles and a quarter S.E. by E. half E. from the north end of Arklow Bank, from which two fixed bright lights will be exhibited; one on the mainmast, at a height of 38 feet above the level of the sea, and the other on the foremast, 22 feet above the sea level. She will have three masts, with globe on the foremast and globe on the mainmast head. Her hull will be painted black, with white stripe, and the words, "Arklow Bank, North," in white letters on her sides.

The South Arklow Bank light-vessel, which now marks the south end of this bank, will be shifted about two miles S.S.E. quarter E. from her present position, and her light will be changed to a bright revolving light every minute, instead of every half-minute as at present. She will have three masts, and carry a half-globe over a globe at her mainmast head. Her hull will be painted black, with a white stripe, and the words, "Arklow Bank, South," in white letters on her sides.

The Blackwater Bank light vessel, which at present marks the north end of the Blackwater Bank, will be moved about one mile and a half east of her present position. The character of her light will remain as hitherto, viz., fixed light. She will have three masts, and carry two globes at her mainmast head, instead of one as heretofore. Her hull will be painted black, with a white stripe, and the words "Blackwater Bank," in white letters, on her sides.

Notice is also given that, on or about the 1st of

May, next year, a light-vessel will be placed near the Lucifer Shoals, on the Wexford coast, and will show a fixed red light. Her position will be about midway between Tuskar Rock Lighthouse and the Blackwater Bank light-vessel. She will carry three masts, with a globe at mainmast head, and will be painted and lettered similar to the other vessels. When all these important changes have been completed it is to be hoped that the public will be spared in future from hearing of so many disastrous wrecks on the much-dreaded and dangerous coast of Wexford.

The shipowners and captains of the merchant service owe a debt of gratitude to the Mercantile Marine Service Association of Liverpool for the persistent manner with which that body urged upon the Board of Trade, and the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House, the necessity of making the above invaluable additions and alterations in the buoys and lights on the eastern coast of Ireland.

CHARCOAL.—Charred wood is inflammable in proportion to the lowness of the temperature at which it has been reduced. For gunpowder the charcoal is made very slowly, at a low temperature, and consequently has a very low igniting point, requiring great care to prevent its igniting spontaneously. It is said that by taking years for the process, at a proportionally low heat, the dried and shrunken fibre, penetrated everywhere by air, will ignite at a temperature not far above that of boiling water.

NEW APPLICATION OF MICA.—Mica, or Muscovy glass, as it is sometimes called, from the fact of it doing the duty of window-glass in many parts of Russia, has lately been proposed by M. Pucher as a material well adapted for the decoration of numerous industrial products. The thin discs, almost films, into which this substance can be split are first treated with concentrated sulphuric acid, which thoroughly cleans the surface, and prepares it for the silvering, which is effected in the usual manner. Its extreme flexibility admirably suits it for being laid on curved surfaces, but this property can be considerably diminished by heating it to redness, at the same time that a sort of iridescent quality is bestowed upon it. When viewed by reflected light it has all the appearance of frosted silver, and when by direct rays it exhibits a number of gray streaks, disappearing into opacity when a number of discs are superimposed in succession. In using mica for inlaying purposes it should be cut to the necessary dimensions before undergoing the operation of being heated. A very pleasing effect is produced by covering a coating of fresh glue with small pieces of mica and afterwards varnishing the whole, and the results may be varied by using fine powder of the same substance instead. According to M. Pucher a very beautiful silver ink may be produced by mixing fine powder of mica with a solution of gum-arabic.

DRAWING UPON AGATE.—The peculiarity of agate in presenting somewhat fantastic representations of landscapes and various geometrical combinations is well known to the mineralogist, and has gained for them the various names of fortifications, landscapes, cat's eye, and other appellations having reference to the particular feature embodied in each especial variety. At present it appears that these mineralogical freaks of nature can be artificially imitated with the greatest facility and in different colours. The process consists in first obtaining a well-polished stone, and tracing the design upon it with a goose quill dipped in a pretty strong solution of nitrate of silver (lunar caustic), and then exposing it to be dried by the heat of the sun. Before the sun acts upon it the lines are of a brownish tint, which gradually changes to red as the drying becomes thoroughly accomplished. By mixing with the solution above mentioned about 10 per cent. of soot and the same proportion of tartrate of potash a grayish colour is obtained, and a beautiful violet is produced by adding to three parts of the nitrate of silver solution one part of alum. An opaque white is given by the employment of nitrate of bismuth. All these colours and tints resist wet and the ordinary atmospheric influences, and can only be radically obliterated by submitting the stone to the action of an intense heat. They temporarily disappear when acted upon by concentrated acids, but after the agate is washed they reappear on being again submitted to the warmth of the solar rays.

THE JENNINGS.—A person named Jennings died recently at Sheffield, leaving a large fortune to his next of kin. To determine who was the next of kin was the difficult matter, and a few days ago one Jennings, who thought he had a good claim, called by advertisement a meeting of all the Yorkshire Jenningses, and engaged a small room in Sheffield. The hour at which the family party was to assemble was eleven o'clock in the morning, and before that hour the Brunswick Hotel was literally crammed with per-

sons, all of whom gloried in the name of Jennings. Mr. Bland, the landlord, was amazed at the number of his visitors, and he was not a little perplexed as to how he should accommodate them. The cry was "Still they come!" and, as there was no head amongst them, no one to take the lead and introduce the question in a regular and business-like manner—the man who secured the room being as much astonished at the number of his namesakes, and as incapable of directing their deliberations as Mr. Bland was to afford them the requisite accommodation for the purpose—the meeting ultimately broke up without anything being determined.

A FAITHFUL DOG.

A VERY singular and interesting occurrence was recently brought to light in the Edinburgh Burgh Court, by the hearing of a summons in regard to a dog tax. Eight years and a half ago a man named Gray, of whom nothing is known except that he lived in a quiet way in some obscure part of the town, was buried in old Grayfriars' churchyard. His grave, levelled by the hand of time, and unmarked by any stone, is now scarcely discernible; but though no human interest would seem to attach to it the sacred spot has not been wholly disregarded and forgotten. During all these years the dead man's faithful dog has kept constant watch and guard over the grave, and it was this animal for which the collectors sought to recover the tax. James Brown, the old curator of the burial ground, remembers Gray's funeral, and the dog, a Scotch terrier, was, he says, one of the most conspicuous of the mourners. The grave was closed in as usual, and the next morning "Bobby," as the dog is called, was found lying on the newly made mound. This was an innovation which old James could not permit, for there was an order at the gate stating in the most intelligible characters that dogs were not admitted. "Bobby" was accordingly driven out; but next morning he was there again, and for the second time he was discharged. The third morning was cold and wet, and when the old man saw the faithful animal, in spite of all chastisement, still lying shivering on the grave, he took pity on him, and gave him some food.

This recognition of his devotion gave "Bobby" the right to make the churchyard his home, and from that time to the present he has never spent a night from his master's grave. Often in bad weather attempts have been made to keep him within doors, but by dismal howls he has succeeded in making it known that this interference is not agreeable to him, and latterly he has always been allowed to have his way. At almost any time during the day he may be seen in or about the churchyard, and no matter how rough the night may be, nothing can induce him to forsake the hallowed spot, whose identity, despite the irresistible obliteration it has undergone, he has so faithfully preserved. "Bobby" has many friends, and the tax-gatherers have by no means proved his enemies. A weekly treat of steaks was long allowed by Sergeant Scott, of the Engineers; but for more than six years he has been regularly fed by Mr. John Trail, of the restaurant, 6, Grayfriars' Place. He is constant and punctual in his calls, being guided in his mid-day visits by the sound of the time-gun.

On the ground of harbouring the dog in this way proceedings were taken against Mr. Trail for payment of the tax. The defendant expressed his willingness could he claim the dog to be responsible for the tax; but so long as the animal refused to attach himself to anyone it was impossible, he argued, to fix the ownership; and the court, seeing the peculiar circumstance of the case, dismissed the summons. "Bobby" has long been an object of curiosity to all who have become acquainted with his interesting history. His constant appearance in the graveyard has caused many inquiries to be made regarding him, and efforts have been made from time to time to get possession of him. The old curator, of course, was the next claimant to Mr. Trail, and yesterday offered to pay the tax himself rather than have "Bobby"—"Grayfriars' Bobby," to allow his full name—put out of the way.

ETIOLATION IN A COAL-MINE.—The late Professor Robison, many years ago, remarked that plants growing in darkness were not only white, but that they did not attain the natural form of their leaves nor their natural odour. In descending a coal-mine he accidentally met with a plant growing luxuriantly, the form and qualities of which were entirely new to him. The sod on which it grew was removed and carefully attended to in his garden. The etiolated plant died, but the roots speedily threw out vigorous shoots, which, from the form of their leaves, he recognized as common tansy.



[EDWARD HODGES BAILY, R.A.]

A GREAT SCULPTOR.

DURING the past few months the realm of art has lost many of its brightest representatives. But a short time since Clarkson Stanfield, whose seapieces ranked highest of their class and gained for their painter a world-wide reputation, was taken from us, now we have to record the death of one equally great in another department of art, one who a few years since retired from the noisy bustle of public life, to live in happy seclusion the remainder of his life. Thus, to the world, Edward Hodges Baily, whose name as a sculptor was once a household word, has been as it were in oblivion, and now that his death is announced it is difficult to realize that we have lost an artist who had reached by his beautiful and poetical works the highest pinnacle of the sculptor's art. A few moments' reflection, however, brings to the mind of all lovers of sculpture one work which has indelibly stamped the name of Baily upon the records of the 19th century. His "Eve at the Fountain" is a work as immortal as the Vents of Gibson, or the Cleopatra of Story, and one which once seen is to a poetic eye never to be forgotten.

Edward Hodges Baily is a remarkable instance of the fertility of endeavouring to turn the natural leanings of an inborn genius into an opposite channel. Born at Bristol in 1788, the son of a ship carver, one of the cleverest of his time, at the age of fourteen his father, who wished to prevent his son following a calling similar to his own, placed him in a merchant's office.

The close confinement and pouring over musty ledgers, however, soon became distasteful to the youthful Baily, and during his spare time he contrived to learn a great deal of the technicalities of

wax-modelling from a Bristol artist, whose acquaintance he had cultivated. The young pupil progressed so rapidly, being particularly happy in his portraits, that in two years he bid adieu to the counting-house and worked earnestly at wax-modelling, and was so successful that he soon procured a good livelihood. But he was born for greater things than modelling, and soon became ambitious of working in clay. This ambition was greatly increased by his seeing in the Cathedral of Bristol the monument to Mrs. Draper, the "Eliza" of Sterne.

He now threw all his energies into clay-modelling, and soon became so perfect in the art that he received from Mr. Leigh, a surgeon of Bristol, a commission to execute two illustrations to Homer from designs by Flaxman. The admirable manner in which the young artist executed these works so pleased the worthy surgeon that he at once gave him an introduction to Flaxman.

This was the turning-point in Baily's fortune. The great sculptor was so pleased with the talent displayed in the specimens which the young artist showed him that he, without hesitation, admitted him into his studio. Here he worked under the eye of the great master for nearly seven years and a half, during that time becoming a student at the Royal Academy, where he carried off every prize, gaining the gold medal by his "Hercules restoring Alectis." He afterwards became chief modeller and superintendent of artistic modelling to the Messrs. Rundell & Bridge, the royal gold and silver smiths. There it was, so the story goes, that, requiring a design for a tureen cover, he first conceived the idea of "Eve at the Fountain." Whether this be true or not it is not easy to say, but it is certain that this great work was executed during his engagement with this firm. He was only five-and-

twenty when this work was produced, and so great a sensation did it make that, in addition to five repetitions in marble made of it by himself, not less than 20,000 casts of the head were made, besides many reductions of the statue that have been published. The original statue is now in the institution of his native city. From this time the career of the Bristol lad was one of uninterrupted success. In 1817 he was elected an associate of the Royal Academy, and in 1820 an R.A.

Having now followed this great sculptor throughout his early career and struggles to obtain excellence to the summit of his success, we can but enumerate the chief of his various works. His happiest productions were poetical and classical subjects. In his portrait models he was not so successful—indeed, few of these, if any of them, added very greatly to his fame. Among the chief of his poetical and classical productions we may mention "Preparing for the Bath," a work of the most exquisite delicacy of feeling and taste; "Flora and Helen Unveiling before Paris," "The Graces," "Maternal Love," "The Sleeping Nymph," the beautiful "Eve Listening to the Voice," "Resignation" (1856), and "Genius" (1858), erected in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House. "Marius Contemplating the Ruins of Carthage." In conjunction with the late Sir Richard Westmacott, Mr. Baily was commissioned to execute the sculptural decorations of Buckingham Palace, particularly the bas-reliefs of the Throne Room, and which also included the Marble Arch at Hyde Park Corner, then before the palace.

His principal portrait statues are those of Lord Egremont; Admiral Duncan; Sir Astley Cooper, at St. Paul's; Earl Grey, colossal, for the Newcastle Column; the colossal statue of Nelson hoisted on the top of the Trafalgar Square column; Telford, the engineer, colossal; Sir Richard Bourke, Governor of New South Wales; Lord Cornwallis; Baron Metcalfe, for Jamaica; Lord Holland, a bust with large allegorical figures, in the nave of Westminster Abbey; Lord Mansfield, at Chelmsford; Charles James Fox and Lord Mansfield, in St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster; Sir Robert Peel, at Bury and Manchester; the Duke of Sussex, colossal, in Freemasons' Tavern; and Turner the painter. Among his many busts of distinguished men are those of Flaxman, Stothard, Fuseli, Munden, Byron, Haydon, Campbell, R. Smirke, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Northcote, Lord Brougham, Lord Gough, Thalberg, Professor Owen, Sir John Herschel, Dr. Whewell, Douglas Jerrold, Robert Stephenson, and Hepworth Dixon—said to be his last work.

Anecdotes of celebrated men are always interesting. Haydon in his autobiography tells a story so illustrative of Baily's temperament and great self-respect that we cannot omit to repeat it. "The Duke of Wellington," he says, "had written to Storr and Mortimer that he would see Baily on Wednesday; they told him nothing of it until Wednesday afternoon. Off he set on Thursday, and came on the Duke when he was deeply studying some papers and details connected with India. The Duke came down as soon as Baily was announced, and flew at him in a fury. Baily told me he included in the most violent imprecations himself with all other artists, for what he called 'tormenting him,' adding that his career was over at forty-seven, and asking why they could not be content with what they had done already. Baily said he bent his fist to knock the clay model to pieces; but the Duke got up on the horse, and Baily modelled away. When he had done sitting he withdrew, and Baily took his bag up to the steward, and was about to retire to the inn to dine. The steward said, 'Sir, the Duke expects you at dinner and to sleep here.' 'Tell the Duke,' said Baily, 'I'll be hanged if I dine at the table of any man who uses me as he has done.' Baily went to the inn, and was drinking his wine, when he saw a groom galloping towards the house. He inquired for Mr. Baily. He was shown in. Baily said, 'Tell the Duke I'll never dine at his table nor sleep at his house.' The next day he went again. The Duke came in in a very bad temper, and said, 'I suppose I may read my letters.' He sat, and read, and tore open his letters in a fury. Baily finished. The Duke began to melt and excuse himself, and offered to sit again; but Baily declined. Since then the Duke told Mortimer, the silversmith, he would sit again. I like this, as it is admirable; but Baily would not accept it. I like this burst of character, and," adds Haydon, "thank God, he is like ourselves."

Jealousy appears to have been a thing unknown to Mr. Flaxman, who treated Mr. Baily more as a son than a pupil, during the time of his stay with him. Upon leaving this great and kind master, Baily took a house and studio at No. 8, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road; thence he removed to No 10, in the same street, where De Wint, the water-colour painter, and Hilton, his brother-in-law, had lived before.

Twenty years later he removed to the house of Becon, whose monument to Mrs. Draper had first fired his ambitious spirit.

His death, as we have already said, will hardly be noticed by the public, but nevertheless in the world of art his loss will be felt by all as creating another blank in the list of the great sculptors of the age. Few men have had so long and so prosperous a career. At the age of sixteen fortune first smiled on his efforts, and gradually increased her favours until he reached the height of his ambition, never once forsaking him until at the advanced age of eighty, when he died regretted by all his friends and relations. His remains were interred at Highgate Cemetery.

The portrait of this great sculptor, which we give this week, is copied from a photograph by John and Charles Watkins, of Parliament Street. It is the last portrait taken of Mr. Baily, and one for which he sat a short time previous to his death, and is a most excellent likeness.

RALPH MARKHAM.

CHAPTER VI.

It is best for us, personally, to take a look at the visitor, whose conversation with Ralph Markham, overheard by Angela, caused her such anxiety and agitation.

The moment he came in Markham told Letty—his housekeeper—in plain words to go to bed.

And she obeyed, casting an angry scowl at the man, Vanderlip.

"That old woman looks darker than a thunder-cloud at me every time I see her," said Vanderlip as Letty disappeared.

"Never mind her. I've something to say to you after I get a noggin of rum punch ready for use," said Markham. "You got the message that I sent off to the sloop?"

"Yes. Black Caesar came off, and said you wanted to see me. 'Twas rather a nasty night to come ashore in; but here I am, like a whale in a flurry."

Ralph Markham went to a corner cupboard, and took from it a demijohn, some lemons, and a sugar-bowl. Then, opening a large oak chest, he took from it a silver punch-bowl, which bore the same crest and initials that were on the silver used at the supper-table. He then proceeded to brew the punch, of which he had spoken, an operation which Burt Vanderlip watched with a look of quiet satisfaction.

Vanderlip was by no means handsome—that is, if any man can be called handsome—a matter of serious doubt with me.

He was tall, coarsely and heavily built, with a round, cocoa-nut-shaped head, on which a bushy shock of coarse red hair stuck out in all directions. A pair of small gray eyes, sharp and fiery, peered out from below a low, flat forehead; a sharp nose, with a downward hook like the beak of a parrot, was set in a face that had been deeply pitted with the small-pox. A quantity of bristle-like red whiskers covered the lower part of his face, leaving a wide mouth visible, however, in which when he laughed could be seen a set of snaggle teeth, black with the tobacco which he constantly used.

A rough seaman's dress covered his huge, ungainly form. His expression of face was rough, almost brutal, and when he laughed, showing his fang-like teeth, he appeared more hideous than ever.

After Ralph Markham had prepared the punch he placed it on the table with a couple of silver cups, and, filling each, drew his own chair up and told Vanderlip to do the same.

"I like your punch, Ralph," said Vanderlip as he drained his cup and set it down within reach of Ralph for refilling. "You're more stingy of the water than you are of the rum, and that suits me to a dot. And now let me know what's up. I'm on hand, you know, when there's anything to be done."

"I know it, Burt, and that is the reason I sent for you. Did you see a vessel come to anchor outside of Tavernier a little while before dark?"

"Yes, I did; and if it hadn't been coming on to blow I should have taken a boat and gone out to see what she was."

"I can tell you, just as well as if you had boarded her."

"Why, you haven't been out there, have you?"

"I was out on the reef before she crossed it, and saw the man who owns and sails her," said Ralph, emptying his cup of punch and refilling both cups. She is a yacht owned and commanded by a son of the Earl of Lonsdale, whom I hated with a bitterness that no words can express. He it was that caused me, with shame in my face and disgrace on a proud name, to fly from my native land, never, never to return there again. He is out of the reach of my revenge, but his

son has crossed my path, and for him it had been better to have crossed the path of a tiger in his native jungle. If he lingers a day on this coast after the storm breaks he shall never leave it alive. England shall see him no more. Then there will be a new Earl of Lonsdale, and I know who he will be. But that is nothing to you. Drink up your punch, and then I will tell you what I want you to do."

"Good. The first order is obeyed, and my ears are open for the next," said Vanderlip, with a sinister smile.

"The moment this gale breaks so that you can board that yacht I want you to do it; and if he says he is going to stay in these waters even a day offer your services to him as a pilot. If he wants to come ashore offer to be his guide; and, mark you, keep him away from this house, and watch every step he takes, every question he asks, even every glance of his eyes. He has gold—tons of it perhaps—or property that would bring tons; but never mind that now. He has seen Angela, and I know, from what his father was, what he must be. He will try to see her again. But, curses on his head! he shall not."

"Not when I'm about," said Vanderlip, with a scowl on his black brow. "The man that wants to sail around her will find me worse than any shovelled shark that ever swum or took a swimmer by the leg. I like that girl, and you know it."

"Yes, I do. And for that I've picked you out to keep an eye on this chap. She thinks he is kind spoken, and when a woman as young as she is thinks any good of a mere stranger it don't take much to make her think more of him. Now, if he does come ashore, and tries to get a sight of her, if he should get into a bit of a quarrel with somebody, and get knocked on the head, I shouldn't feel sorry. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," said Vanderlip.

"And if he don't, but wants to hang around in these waters in hopes, maybe, of seeing her afloat again, I want you to be his pilot, for you can put his yacht into a trouble she'll never get out of. Just give her a bumping jam on the reef that'll start a hole in her bottom, and get her over in deep water with it, and I'll be close by to take you off safely. Then let her sink—let her sink!"

"That's humane. It wouldn't be the first craft I've put in the way of finding the bottom outside of common soundings, nor the first travellers that I've put on the road for another world. But that's neither here nor there. What you want done shall be done. But mark you, Ralph, I want my reward, and I must have it. I want that girl, and I will have her."

"She don't like you, Burt."

"What do I care for her likes or dislikes? Once she is mine I can keep her on a straight course. If I can't there'll be a woman less in the world by the time I'm done with her."

"Well, well, Burt. Do as I wish with this young earl and his yacht, and I shall not stand in the way of your wishes. And what I tell that girl to do she has got to do. She knows better than to cross my will. Take some more of the punch, Burt; it will not hurt you on such a night as this."

"No, nor on any other night. I take kindly to that sort of drink, and it tastes all the nicer for the ware you drink it out of. It wouldn't do for everybody to know that you eat and drink off and out of silver. There are chaps that might try to borrow it."

"And get lead instead of silver for their pains," said Markham, in a quiet way. "I've no fear of being robbed, for few know anything about what I have here. From you, of course, I hide nothing, but others around here are less fortunate."

"Hide nothing?" said Vanderlip, with a peculiar smile. "There's two things that I've asked you about more than once, and you've never given me a straightforward answer to either matter. One is, I know, and everyone else that gets to know you well knows, that you were a gentleman born and bred before you came and learned the business of a diver, and that your real name is no mere Ralph Markham than mine is Burt Vanderlip, and I've gone by a false name this twenty years. You've never told me who and what you were before you took to diving, though it isn't a great deal you do at that after all."

"Who or what I have been is nothing to you, Burt Vanderlip," said Markham, sternly. "That is a matter upon which I satisfy no man's curiosity. The day may come when you will know all about me without asking. Let this reply satisfy you."

"It must. But then, about the girl—you once hinted—"

"Stop where you are, Burt Vanderlip, on that point. Once, in a moment of excitement, I said more to you about her than I meant to. But I remembered myself in time, and I told you never to speak of it again until I brought the matter up.

Now, I do not wish to caution you about it again, for, mark me, when anyone tries to pry into anything which I choose to keep secret that person makes an enemy of me. As long as you and I sail on smooth water together matters will go smooth with us, but if you raise a storm in my breast we part company."

"Well, well, I didn't mean nothin' wrong—you needn't get in a flurry with me, Ralph. I'm a bit curious, I know, it's my natur', but I'm willing to wait till you choose to tell me what I'd like to know. She is as pretty a one as ever picked a flower from its stem. I'm a hard case with a bad account of life to look back to, but whenever I'm where she is I feel like being and doing better. There's a heap of the angel in her, you can bet high on that."

"There ought to be when she has two such evil ones as we to deal with," said Ralph, with a grin. "But dash your punch, man—finish your punch."

CHAPTER VII.

ALL the first night, and all the next day, the yacht of the Earl of Lonsdale lay with her anchors holding fast in the muddy bottom to the leeward of Tavernier, but the gale blew with such tremendous force that communication with the shore was literally impossible. Close as they were to the land, with the wind blowing directly off shore, the sea rose to such a height that the yacht at times fairly pitched her bows under. But her full scope of cable was out, attached to her heaviest anchors, and the last were deeply imbedded in the mud of the locality which by good fortune her young commander had chosen for his anchorage.

To those on board the yacht the storm caused but little inconvenience. In a cruise which had been intended for nearly two years even the ladies had become perfectly used to the swell of the sea, therefore the pitching and rolling of the yacht gave them no unusual trouble. The crew rather liked it than otherwise, for only an anchor watch of a couple of men was now kept on deck, instead of the one half of them, which would have been the case had they been under weigh.

The sailing-master, his two mates and the surgeon, the only officers who messed aboard the main-mast, and who had their own comfortable cabin to themselves, liked it, for they had nothing now to do but to play whist and cribbage, and drink hot lemonade, slightly medicated by the skill of the doctor, who, having once served in the navy, understood the best way of making lemonade palatable to healthy patients.

The two maids of Lady Lonsdale and her daughter rather liked it, for they had rather more time than usual, for their mistresses were not accustomed to using much formality of dress when stormy weather was on hand. Therefore the two young women had time to carry on with additional fervour a courtship which had lasted the whole length of the cruise between them and the boatswain and carpenter of the yacht, two smart and likely young men, even if they were blue-jackets.

The ladies had books, needle-work, music, and conversation to employ their time. The only one on board who seemed nervous and uneasy was the young earl. Early and late he was on deck, with a powerful spy-glass in his hand, scanning the vessels in the harbour, the houses on shore, and the few people whom he could see moving about. He had counted every house, looked at every tree on the islands within the scope of his glass, even read the names on the sterns of the wrecking vessels as they swung at their moorings, until he had thent all by heart. There were the Whale, Viper, Texas, Key West, Geiger, Catherine, and a half-dozen others, sloops and schooners, all pretty much of the same build, numerously manned; for wrecking, when honourably conducted, is a hard business and requires its vessels to have large crews.

The crew of the yacht was composed of young and athletic men, thorough seamen however. But the officers that had been chosen by the young earl were half-pay officers of the navy, men of mature age and experience, and such as he knew were accustomed to discipline, and would, with their knowledge and prudence, keep such a crew in order.

The sailing-master was a grizzly old man, whose greatest pride was that he had been a midshipman under Nelson and Collingwood—a matter of which he boasted full twenty times a day.

He had visited every known port in the world during fifty years of sea service as boy and man, and was a thorough seaman and navigator in every sense, though much given to growling when not slightly under the comforting influence of the doctor's lemonade. His two mates were very like himself, only ten or a dozen years younger.

But Doctor Heavysides was the character of the vessel. His frame, as if in contradiction to his name, was as spare and lean almost as a skeleton, though he was a perfect epicure and gourmand.

Yet the doctor was never ill. Nor did the men ever get ill under him more than once if they could help it. He had four favourite medicines—salts, ipecacuanha, blue pill, and castor oil—and he was not a believer in homœopathic doses either. Yet he was an excellent surgeon, and well skilled in the treatment of all diseases.

The doctor's point was punning. He had become so used to it in his early days that he could not abstain from it afterwards. And it had cost him dearly. It was that which took him from the line of promotion in the Royal Navy and put him on half-pay ashore.

He had passed all his examinations with credit, in spite of his puns, which, relevant or irrelevant, were sure to slip out. He had been appointed the surgeon of a three-decker under the command of Admiral Sir Peter Holyhead, and on reporting for duty had been invited to dine in the cabin with the admiral, who was a "touchy" individual on every point—his own name especially.

At dinner the new surgeon went kindly into the wine, because he told the admiral, as they were in the harbour, he must honour the port, and, having got pretty lively, he asked that officer if he knew why he ought to live until he arrived at the age of Methuselah.

"No, sir," said the sensitive admiral. "My physicians have always advised me to be careful in my diet, as my constitutional tendency was apoplectical."

"Pine-apple—plectical, I should say," said Doctor Heavysides, with a twinkle of his small gray eyes. "You need never die at all, much less starve yourself on toast and green tea. Why, admiral, you have in yourself one of the greatest preservatives known to the scientific world."

"What is that, pray?" asked the admiral, blandly.

"Salt-Peter!" cried the doctor, bursting out in a laugh, half tipsy as he was, which, with the joke which he "couldn't see," so enraged the admiral that he ordered the doctor away from his table.

"Before going, Sir Peter," said the doctor, "will you permit me to make one explanatory remark?"

"Yes, sir; but let it be to the point," said the angry officer.

"It shall be, Saint Peter—I beg pardon, Sir Peter. The name of Holy-head made me forget myself," said the doctor. "But as you have been reared on the ocean, if you're not Salt-Peter, what are you?"

"I am Sir Peter Holyhead, admiral of the blue, doctor. And the difference between my name and the one you deserve is slight. You, sir, are a block-head, and I shall at once send to the Lords of the Admiralty for another surgeon. I want a gentleman in your place."

"Nothing gentle will stay long in such rough quarters as you make," said the doctor as he vanished from the cabin.

He paid for his joke dearly in this case. He was relieved from duty and never put on it again.

On the morning of the second day the earl was standing aft with the spy-glass in his hand, when the doctor came on deck, and, respectfully saluting him, asked what he made out on shore that was interesting.

"Nothing very interesting, doctor," said the young earl, pleasantly. "If you were doomed to live in a place so small as that I am afraid the number of your patients would hardly make you a rich man. There are eleven dwelling-houses and one shop only, and the vessels are, I presume, nothing but transient visitors."

"The fewer my patients the more patience I'd have, my lord," said the doctor, with a broad grin on his cadaverous face.

"Ah, doctor, what will you not make the subject of a pun?"

"The commander of the ship I sail in, my lord," replied the doctor, with a bow. "I lost the best berth I ever had by my doing it, and on that point I've been careful ever since. Do you think the gale will break soon, my lord?"

"I hope so, for I want to go on shore to see what kind of people these wreckers and divers are of whom I've heard so much."

"Wreckless, while they stay ashore there, and not very deep, if they are divers, without they are half seas under," said the doctor, gravely; for he had never laughed at his own jokes since his trouble

with Sir Peter. "In a climate like this, strongly impregnated with salt and lime, where there are no swamps to create miasma, for these islands are of coral formation, according to Humboldt, the people must be healthy."

"How do you and Captain Cavendish remain on such good terms when he is such a growler?" said the earl, laughing.

"Easy, my lord, easy. Your lordship knows I'm very fond of cavendish." And the doctor pulled out a plug of the far-famed tobacco and exhibited it. "He is too, and whenever I see a cloud on his face I hand out his favourite, and I become like a sun to dispel his gloom. Understanding the nature of almost all kinds of dishes, I certainly ought to get along with old ware like him. I let him beat me at whist once in a while, for I cannot keep whist myself all the time. But see, my lord, there is a large whale-boat coming out from the harbour in this direction."

"Yes, a surf-boat. Those wreckers are daring men to risk themselves in such a seaway," said the earl, looking at the boat as it rose and fell on the great waves, yet came steadily on, rowed by men used to such seas and such weather.

"Reckless, for slaves," said the doctor.

"Slaves? Why, they are white men, doctor," said the young earl.

"You said, just now, my lord, that it was a serf-boat. Is not a serf a slave?"

"You are a slave to your habit of punning, doctor."

"Then, my lord, you cannot blame me if I am not free from it."

The earl made no reply, but, watching the boat as it came off, he said:

"Six oarsmen, and one steering. What can bring them off in this kind of weather?"

"Their boat, my lord, if they get off at all," said the doctor, darting away as he spoke, for fear that he had this time offended.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANGELA passed a sleepless night, listening to the howling of the storm, and thinking of the conversation which she had overheard between her father and the man Vanderlip.

Its effect was visible on her pale face, and in her weary-looking eyes, when she came down to breakfast in the morning.

"What is the matter with you, child?" asked Ralph Markham as he noticed her pallor. "You look ill."

"Nothing that I know of, father. The wind blew so hard, shaking the house, that I did not sleep very well."

"I've heard you say a hundred times that the shrill sound of the whistling gale, or the pattering of rain drops, lulled you to sleep."

"Sometimes, father—sometimes. Last night it did not. All kinds of fancies ran through my brain. I thought I could hear wild, strange voices in the wind."

"Maybe you heard the kind and gentle voice that you heard out on the reef yesterday," said Markham, sneeringly. "Girl, you are given to dreaming. But mark me—you'd better not dream of anything, or anyone, of whom I do not approve."

Angela made no reply, but tried to partake of some of the food on the table. But she could not. Her mind was full of thoughts, which it would not have been well for him to know, and she loathed the food, and could scarcely swallow a part of her cup of coffee.

"You'd better go to bed, girl, and sleep off this spasm," said Markham, roughly, as he rose from the table, having himself made, as usual, a hearty meal.

She made no reply to his advice, rudely spoken, but she left the room and went up into her chamber, not to sleep, but with a small, powerfully lensed spy-glass to look at the yacht, which she could plainly see pitching and rolling at her anchorage. She could only see a few persons moving about the decks of the vessel. But aft, with a spy-glass in his hand, she plainly recognized the face and form of the one whose kind and gentle voice still rang in her ears—the handsome and noble-looking stranger whom she had seen the day before.

He was scanning the shore as keenly with his glass as she was observing him with hers. Was he thinking of or looking for a sight of her? How her young heart fluttered as she asked herself this question! While she was thus pondering the door of

her chamber was opened, and Letty, the housekeeper, came in.

Notwithstanding the old woman had a harsh and repulsive-looking face, and was almost constantly muttering and growling with discontent while at work below, there was an unmistakable look of kindness in her eyes and on her face, and a tone of sympathy in her voice, as she approached Angela, and said, in a low tone:

"I've come up, child, to see what worried you. He has gone out, the cross old porpoise, and I wish he'd stay out, if he can't be more kind to you. The people here all call you the 'Pearl of the Reef,' but if they only knew what a rough shell that Ralph Markham makes this house for you they'd hate him worse than I do."

"Why do you stay with him, Letty, when he is so cross and unkind to you?"

"Why, Miss Angela—why? Ah, if I could but tell you! But I cannot while he lives. He would kill me if I did. But one thing I've sworn to—I never, never will leave you while I live until you have your rights, and not then, without you drive me away. Bad and cross as I am, child, did I ever speak an unkind word to you?"

"No, Letty, you have always been kind and good to me, and I love you very much for it."

"Ah, bless you, child—bless you! I have reason to be good to you, and the day may come when I can do more for you than you dream of."

And the old woman brushed away a couple of tears with her brown, wrinkled hand.

"You can do me a good service now, good Letty," said Angela.

"What is it, my young mistress?"

"Do you see that vessel yonder?"

"Yes, child."

"That is the yacht my father was talking about last night, owned and commanded by the young earl, whom he hates, I know not why, so terribly that he is determined to destroy him. Last night I heard him and that hateful Captain Vanderlip plotting the destruction of the vessel and all on board. Vanderlip, as soon as it is possible, is to go on board and offer his services as pilot. You can imagine the rest."

"Yes, child, he is to pilot her to destruction, I suppose."

"That is what he agrees to do for a price. Oh, Letty, it makes me shudder to think of it!"

"What price, poor child?"

"Great heavens!" said Angela, in a tone of agony. "You know how the hateful man has persecuted me with his coarse attentions—"

"He'll find that I've a word to say before you can be sacrificed to that thieving pirate, for such I know him by his own boasts to be. No wonder Ralph Markham hurried me off out of the way last night. But, child, who is this earl that he hates so much? Did he not mention his name?"

"Yes, the Earl of Lonsdale."

"Lonsdale! The Earl of Lonsdale? My heaven!" gasped the old woman, her face turning as white as the snowy curtain which Angela had drawn aside from the window. "Child, are you sure?"

"Yes, Letty; I heard him mention the name more than once. The father of the earl was named William; he is dead, and the name of the son is Plantagenet—so strange a name I could not forget it."

"No, child, no, do not forget it. He must be saved—at every hazard he must be saved. And I must see him."

"Do you know him, Letty?"

"Yes, child, yes; I knew him when he was a baby in arms. And I know his father. And I know why Ralph Markham hates him too."

"Why do you always speak of my father to me as Ralph Markham, Letty?"

"Because he is Ralph Markham to you, Angela. I have known him by another name," said Letty, quickly. "Don't ask me anything more about him now, child—not now. Some time, maybe, I shall be at liberty to tell you all that you ought to know."

"But do tell me this, Letty, only this. Sometimes, from your looks and words too, when you speak to him, as well as to me, I think you hint that he is not my father. Oh, do tell me if it be so! I feel that I do not love him as a daughter should love a father—I try to, but I cannot. Do tell me truly, Letty."

"Hark! I hear his steps downstairs. He must not know I'm up here talking to you!" cried Letty, and she hurried away without replying to the question of Angela.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Earl of Lonsdale watched the surf-boat coming off towards his yacht, as she rose and fell on the huge rolling waves, with more than common interest. It was a gallant sight to see those six red-shirted, brawny oarsmen pulling a long, heavy, sweeping stroke, carefully feathering their oars to avoid "crab-catching" on the foam-crested seas; and the man who held the steering-oar astern, and directed the others, seemed to have a cool head as well as a steady nerve.

In a little while, wind and sea both with them, the surf-boat and its crew were alongside of the yacht; and as the bow-oarsman laid in his oar and took the boat's painter in his hand the steersman shouted:

"In with your oars, men—in with your oars, and stand by to jump."

Then, with one dextrous push of his steering-oar, the boat being still under good headway, he sent the boat close in under the quarter of the yacht; and as the bowsman leaped on the rail of the latter with the boat's painter in his hand he and all the boat's crew each struck the yacht with a simultaneous jump, while the boat, held fast by a long rope or painter, was allowed to float away to a safe lee under the stern of the yacht.

"Very boldly pulled, and very handsomely landed alongside," said the earl, in an applauding tone of voice, as the steersman of the surf-boat, hat in hand, approached him.

"Thank you, sir. We are wreckers by profession, and used to such work," said the oarsman. "My name is Vanderlip, and I command the sloop Viper, laying in yonder at Rodriguez harbour. Seeing you were a stranger, and laying here in a bad spot, if it comes on to blow much heavier, I thought I'd try to board you to offer my services as pilot, should you need me. This blow hasn't got half to its full height yet."

"There you and I differ in opinion, Captain Vanderlip," said the young earl. "It looks to me as if the storm would soon break up."

"You're not used to these northerly as I am, sir," said Vanderlip. "They always lull a bit after blowing heavy from the north'ard, and then, chopping around to south-west, blow ten times harder than ever."

"To the south-west? That would bring us on the shore," cried the earl.

"Yes, sir, and an awful sea would roll in here," said Vanderlip, in a serious tone. "Your berth here is good enough while the wind hangs where it is, for you've got good holding-ground; but when it shifts you'd be in a bad fix."

"Could we not make scant sail and get into the harbour where your sloop is moored?"

"That depends on your draught of water, sir. But our vessels are centre-board craft, and none draw over eight feet of water, loaded. The Viper draws only six, but the Catherine draws eight, and she is the biggest sloop in there except the Texas, and she draws full as much."

"And my yacht draws fourteen feet," said the earl.

"Then she can't get in there; but I could run on into Cesar's Creek, a few miles farther in the reef, where she could lay in water as smooth as the face of a looking-glass in all winds, and is completely land-locked," said the volunteer pilot.

"Then I suppose it will be best for us to shift the anchorage," said the earl.

Then, turning to his sailing-master, who had come on deck and heard the statement of Vanderlip, he asked him what sail the yacht could carry in that wind.

"A balance-reefed mainsail and a close-reef fore-storm staysail would send her along like a kite in this gale, and be all she ought to have on her spars, close hauled," replied the sailing-master.

"Then get ready to make sail, and heave both anchors short at once, so that we can trip first one and then the other quickly before she has much of a chance to drag."

"Aye, aye, your lordship."

And he went forward to turn the hands up to duty. And now, Captain Vanderlip, while the crew is busy in getting ready to get under weigh you can answer me a few questions, if you will."

"Yes, sir. My men may as well lend yours a hand. Away—forward there, boys, and help to get the yacht under weigh!"

The wreckers obeyed, and Captain Vanderlip turned to signify that he was ready to hear the earl's questions.

"Do you know a man on shore who calls himself Ralph Markham?" asked the earl.

"Yes, a diver. I know him well," replied Vanderlip. "He has a daughter, a very beautiful girl, Angela Markham—'The Pearl of the Reef,' we all call her. She is pretty, and what is nicer yet, her and me are to be married in a week or two."

"Her and you!" cried the earl, in a tone of wonder and with a look of astonishment.

"Why, yes. Do you think there is anything strange in a young chap like me liking a pretty girl?" said Vanderlip, sharply.

"Well, no—not in your liking such a beautiful girl. I would blame no one for being smitten with such beauty. But excuse me, captain, I am plain spoken. You are far from handsome yourself, and of a rough mould. It seems to me singular that such a beautiful girl should love you."

"Oh! As to that, sir, she fairly dotes on me. You never saw a girl love so hard in your life. The minute I asked her she cried yes; and because her father wanted the wedding put off for a few weeks, till he could send for her wedding fit-out, she cried for two or three hours."

"I pity her taste," muttered the earl, turning on his heel, and going forward to see how the cables came in.

The cables were now short, or, to use terms which landmen will understand, all the length of chains had been drawn in by the windlass, until only a few fathoms' length were out between the vessel and the anchors. It was necessary to raise the canvas now, though no sheets were touched yet, or would be until the anchors were a-weigh, and the vessel ready to fill her sails.

The sailing-master now set the hands to hoisting the reefed mainsail, and, when that was up, he started the head of the staysail, and then again put the hands to the windlass.

When the first anchor broke ground the schooner began to drag, but it was soon up, and then the other chain was run in. The helm of the vessel being put a starboard to cast the vessel's head in the right direction, while she had stern-board, she was soon in a position for the staysail, which was hoisted, and even with this little canvas heeling lee-rail under, the yacht started to the eastward, under the pilotage of Vanderlip.

CHAPTER X.

WITH eyes almost starting from their sockets with terror and anxiety, Angela watched the surf-boat of Burt Vanderlip when it left the side of the sloop and steered out towards the yacht.

"Oh, merciful heaven!" she moaned, in agony. "That man is going out there to carry out my father's wicked wishes. That vessel is doomed—is doomed! All on board will perish. And I must see it, know it, and be powerless to help them!"

Tears rolled down her cheeks, and her form quivered from head to foot with nervous anxiety.

She did not need her glass to watch the motion of the boat. It could be seen plain enough with the naked eye.

Before the boat started out she had been watching the young earl through her glass, and had seen that he too was examining the shore through the telescopic glass.

Anxiously she watched the boat, inwardly praying that it might be capsize before it got outside the harbour, but it passed the bar safely, and her wretchedness grew greater and greater as she saw it near the yacht, and finally saw Vanderlip and his crew safely on the deck of the latter.

"Oh, heaven! what will he do now?" she murmured, "and what can I do to save that vessel?"

She took her glass again and watched Vanderlip as, hat in hand, he addressed the young earl.

"What can he be saying to him?" she asked herself as she saw the wrecker pointing towards the shore first and then up the reef.

The moment afterwards she understood all, when she saw the crew preparing to get the yacht under weigh.

Vanderlip has been persuading him to change his anchorage, and means to run the yacht ashore, where she will go to pieces, while he can save himself in his surf-boat," she cried. "Oh, heaven, it must not, shall not be! I will save him, I will save them, or die!"

At that moment Letty entered the room.

"What is the matter, child?" she asked. "You are deathly pale. What is the matter?"

"Oh, look! Letty, look!" she cried. "Burt Vanderlip has gone off to the yacht of the Earl of Lonsdale to carry out the plan of my father and destroy her. He has persuaded the commander to move from the safe anchorage where she now is. The crew are raising her anchors. Oh, what can I do to warn them of their danger? It is terrible to sit here powerless and see them go to their destruction. It must not be. Where is my father?"

"Off on board the Viper, I think," said Letty. "He put on his heavy coat, and said he was going there, two hours ago."

"Yes, he went to plan the destruction of the yacht, and to send Vanderlip to accomplish it. If I

had the key to the boat-house I would soon go out to the yacht myself in my own little boat, rough as the waves are."

"Child, you are mad to think of such a thing," said the startled woman.

"I shall go mad to sit here powerless and see that yacht and all on board perish. Letty, I will save them—I will save them!"

"How, Miss Angela, how? I would give what is left of my poor old life to do it, but how can it be done?" cried the housekeeper.

"I will take a hatchet and break the lock of the boat-house, and launch my little boat. She is very light, you know, and I am skilled in the management of her. I feel sure I can get out to the yacht, and I will tell the earl what his danger is."

"Oh, it is too rough—you will perish, poor child, you will perish."

"No, Letty, no! Heaven will help me. Pray for my success, but do not try to hinder me. I will go."

"But your father will see you and interrupt you," cried Letty.

"He cannot. Burt Vanderlip has taken the only surf-boat the Viper had. There is not crew enough upon the sloop to manage her great, lumbering long-boat, if indeed they dared to launch her in such a sea."

"It is a fearful risk," sighed the woman. "If I understood managing a boat, I would go, but I am helpless as a child on the water."

"Do not think of going. Only watch and pray for me," said Angela; and, tying a handkerchief tightly around her head, to confine her flowing hair, and putting on a close jacket of woollen stuff to shield her from the cold spray which she knew was flying over the water, she hurried from the house with a hatchet in her hand to get her boat out of the boat-house.

Meantime Letty, kneeling by the window, watched every motion of the brave girl, talking to herself all the time.

"There she goes, like a fairy treading on the sea," she said as Angela hurried away. "She is at the boat-house already. With a single blow she strikes away the lock; and she lifts out the boat as easily as her father could do it, though in strength he is like a giant compared to her. Already she is at the water side, and the boat is launched. She has forgotten the oars, and runs back to get them; mercy, how she flies! There, she is with them in her hands, and now in the boat, and it is darting away from the shore!"

"The water is smooth as glass yet—the boat goes through it like an arrow through the air. She never turns her head, but pulls on as hard as she can and as steadily as if she did not know that fearful peril surely, and perhaps even death, lays before her. Oh, heaven of mercy, save the brave girl! Do not let her perish while she is trying to save the lives of Thy creatures!"

And the old woman, sobbing, closed her eyes for a moment.

When she opened them she looked at the yacht and saw that the mainsail of the schooner was being hoisted.

"Ah, she will be too late! for if they are under weigh they will go off and never see her, and then she will surely perish—surely! Where is she? I do not see her! She is lost—she is lost!"

And for an instant, in terrible agony, the poor woman wrung her hands and rocked to and fro before the window as many persons do unwittingly in deep distress.

Then her straining eyes caught sight of a speck upon the water.

"No—no! I see her yet!" she cried. "She is more than half way out!"

And Letty caught up the spy-glass and placed it to her eye.

"Yes, she is there! Now I see her on the top of a huge wave! And then she sinks out of sight in the chasm between that and the next. Ah, nobly, grandly does she struggle over the monstrous seas! Heaven will hear me—heaven will save her dear life! The schooner has but one sail up, and they are yet at work raising her anchors. She will get at least where they will see her before they are under weigh. Ah, there is a stir on Vanderlip's sloop! Her father has seen her. Perhaps he guesses what is her errand out on the raging waters. But what can he do to overtake her? There is no boat on the sloop in which he can follow. But mercy—mercy! She will be overtaken, for he has slipped the moorings of the sloop, and the crew are trying to hoist her great mainsail! But they are weak-handed, for half their number are with Vanderlip in the yacht. Every moment is precious now. Oh, row on—row on, dear child! If he overtakes you you are lost! I can see no more—tears blind my poor old eyes! Oh, heaven, help the child!"

(To be continued.)

LONDON THIEVES.—There is but little chance of robbing the Londoner in the streets; he walks too nimbly, and rarely stops to look about him. It is far otherwise with visitors from the country, who are detected instantly by their habit of stopping at every shop window, and are generally marked down. Detectives, who know the pickpocket, are as clever as he at reading his victims. There is only one habit he has which distinguishes him from the crowd, and which he cannot get rid of, and that is the anxious glance around to see that he is not watched. The detective can pick out one of the craft in a moment by this habit. As a rule, all the first-class hands in this line of action are well known to the detectives, and it is now becoming the habit, on great race days or other fashionable gatherings, to waylay them as they get out of the train, and lock them up in some strong room until the gathering is over. Of course this is perfectly illegal; but as the swell-mobsmen are themselves engaged illegally, they are afraid to resent this treatment, not knowing but that they may be really wanted for something they have done.—*From "Gentlemen who are Wanted," by Dr. Wynter.*

PERLEY MATTESON.

It was a dull, rainy day, towards the end of August—one of those days when earth and sky alike are gray and dreary, and the rain drops pattering against the window sound like human sobs. The clock that hung against the wall pointed to the hour of three in the afternoon, and I was sitting by myself in our little inner office, looking at the expanse of dull, gray wall that formed my only prospect from the not over-clean window, and thinking. I had read every square inch of type in the newspapers; I had made out all the necessary papers and documents, and now, with literally "nothing to do," I was musing about Kitty Elton, and wondering how long it would be before I should be able to marry her.

Dear little Kitty! she was as sweet and patient as it was in the nature of woman to be. She was a pretty blue-eyed girl of twenty, with a dimple in her chin, and the sweetest roses on her cheeks that ever inspired the pen of a poet. I was no poet, yet I think I understood and appreciated all her womanly grace and delicate beauty as fully as if my heart's thoughts could shape themselves into verse. And it was of her I was thinking when the door opened, and Mr. Clenner came in.

Mr. Clenner was our "chief"—a dark, silent little man, with a square, stern mouth, and clouded gray eyes, which appeared almost expressionless when they were turned full upon you, and yet they seemed to see everything at one comprehensive glance.

He sat down beside me.

"Meredith," he said, in the quiet, subdued tone that was natural to him, "didn't you say you were getting tired of doing nothing?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I have something for you to do."

"What is it, sir?"

"Something that will bring you both credit and funds if you manage it skilfully. I had intended to go myself, but circumstances happen untowardly, and I shall send you instead."

Bending his head towards me and speaking scarcely above a whisper, he told me the especial business on which I was to be sent. There had been, it seems, a series of very heavy forgeries lately committed, with a boldness and audacity that fairly seemed to set the authorities at defiance. For some time he had been in doubt as to the exact perpetrator of the crime, but after much quiet investigation and looking hither and thither, he had detected the hidden spring—one Perley Matteson—who had skilfully eluded all pursuit, and was now somewhere hiding. His whereabouts had been ascertained as nearly as possible, and it was for me now to go quietly up and apprehend him before he should become aware of our knowledge of all his movements.

I sat listening to the various details of our plan as they were sketched out by Mr. Clenner. The reward that had been privately offered was high—my heart leaped as I reflected how much nearer it would bring me to Kitty Elton—nor did the enterprise seem particularly difficult to accomplish.

"Do you think you can do it?" Mr. Clenner asked, after the whole thing had been laid before me.

"Yes, sir. When shall I start?"

"Now—within half an hour."

"Within half an hour, sir?"

"Yes; why not?"

I could think of no sufficient reason except one, which I did not care to communicate to my superior, the longing wish to see Kitty once more before I started.

"Just as you decide, Mr. Clenner, of course," I said, rising. "If I take the four o'clock express, I shall be there by daylight to-morrow morning."

"Yes, and that is altogether the better plan. He will not remain long in any one place just at present, depend upon it, and what you have to do must be done at once."

All through that long night journey I mused upon the task that lay before me. The house to which I was directed was about half a mile beyond the village of Drownville—the residence of Mrs. Matteson, the mother of the audacious forger. If help was needed I was fully authorized to call for it from the constabulary authorities of Drownville; but I expected to need none.

The rosy dawn was just flushing the eastern sky when I alighted, weary and jaded, from the train, at the little station of Drownville.

"Can you direct me to Mrs. Matteson's place?" I asked of the sleepy station-master, who was yawning behind the little aperture of the ticket-office.

"Matteson—Mrs. Matteson. Follow the main street of the village out, about half a mile, and ye'll come to a patch o' woods, with bars at the fence. Go through them bars a little way farther on, and ye'll see a little cottage, the last place in the world where ye'd expect to see a house. That's where Mrs. Matteson lives."

I thanked my informant, and set out on a brisk walk, carrying my travelling-bag. It was a long distance ere I emerged from the suburbs of the "main street" into a quiet and secluded country road, or rather lane. The "patch o' woods" with the bars, and the "little yellow cottage"—a cream-coloured one literally overgrown with honeysuckles—duly rewarded my search, and as I knocked at the door a clock somewhere inside struck seven.

A decent-looking elderly woman in widow's weeds came to the door.

"Is Mr. Matteson in? Mr. Perley?"

"No," she answered, quickly, with, as I imagined, a rather confused look. I did not believe her, and asked, quietly:

"When do you expect him home?"

"Not at present."

Apparently she expected I would go away, but instead I stepped in.

"Mother," asked a soft voice at the head of the stairs, "who is it?"

And then for the first time I became aware that someone had been listening to our colloquy from the head of the stairs—a young girl dressed like the mother, in deep black, with very brilliant eyes, and a profusion of jet-black ringlets.

"Someone to see your brother."

She came half-way down the stairs, pushing back her curls with one hand, and looking at me with wondering eyes. Even then her beauty struck me as I stood gazing at her.

"Perley is not at home," she said, hurriedly. "He has gone away. We do not know when he will return."

Evidently the mother and daughter were in the secret of Matteson's villainy, and doing their best to screen him from its consequences. My heart bled for both of them; but it was no time to indulge in sentimental pity. Speaking as briefly as I could, I told them it was my duty to compel them to remain where they were while I searched the house.

Mrs. Matteson sat down pale and trembling; her daughter coloured.

"Mother," she said, "why do you stand by and listen to such slanders? It is false! Let this man search the house if he will; my brother Perley is as innocent as I am."

No opposition was offered to my search. It was entirely fruitless, however—there was nowhere any trace of the flown bird. Nevertheless I determined to remain there quietly for a day or two, to see what a little waiting might bring forth.

That same afternoon Clara Matteson came in, as I sat by the window, keeping a quiet watch.

"Mr. Meredith," she said, softly, "mother thinks I have been very rude to you. She says it is not your fault, personally, that you are sent here on—on such an errand, and perhaps she is right. I am very sorry if I have hurt your feelings."

The pretty, penitent way in which she spoke quite won my heart, and a few questions on my part seemed to unlock the hidden recesses of her soul. She talked at first shyly, but afterwards with more confidence. She spoke of her absent brother, and her mother, giving me a thousand artless little family details which I almost dreaded to hear. That twilight talk was one of the pleasantest episodes of my by no means universally pleasant life, and I was considerably annoyed when it was broken in upon by the arrival of the Drownville constables who were to watch through the night. At the sound of their footsteps on the floor Clara rose up and sat down again, confused and frightened.

"Oh, Mr. Meredith—those men——"

"Be easy, Miss Matteson," I said. "You shall in no way be annoyed by them. Your privacy shall not be broken in upon, believe me."

"I know I am silly," faltered Clara, "but oh, it seems so dreadful!"

My orders to the men were brief and succinct. I stationed them as seemed best to me, and then returned to spend the evening with Miss Matteson. And when I was at length alone I could not help thinking—heaven forgive me—how much more winning and graceful she was than poor Kitty Elton.

At length an answer came to my report to Mr. Clenner—it was short, and to the purpose:

"Come back. You are only losing time. If the bird has flown we must look elsewhere for him."

I read the brief missive with a pang. Clara Matteson's cheek deepened in colour as I announced my departure to her.

"You have been far kinder than we dared to hope, Mr. Meredith," she said, as I held her hand in mine.

"You will think of me sometimes, Clara?"

The reader will easily perceive how our intimacy had progressed. She smiled, hung her head, and, taking a pair of scissors from the table, severed one bright black curl from the abundant tresses that hung over her forehead.

"Keep this, Mr. Meredith, in memory of me."

Was I foolish to press the jetty ringlet to my lips ere I laid it closely against my heart? Clara evidently thought I was—for she laughed, but did not seem displeased.

Mr. Clenner seemed annoyed when I got back—rather an unreasonable proceeding on his part, for I had certainly done all that man could do under the circumstances.

"We have been mistaken all the way through, it seems," he said, biting his lip. "Strange—very strange—I never was mistaken before in my calculations. Well, we must try again!"

I went to Kitty Elton's that night. She received me with a sweet, shy gladness of welcome that should have made me the happiest man in all the world; but it did not. Clara Matteson's dark beauty seemed to stand between me and her like a visible barrier. When I took leave there were tears in her blue eyes.

"Kitty, you are crying!"

"Because you are changed, Edward. You do not love me as well as you did!"

"Kitty, what nonsense!"

I was vexed with her, simply because I knew her accusation was true. But I kissed her once more, and took my leave, moody and dissatisfied.

When I reached the office next morning Mr. Clenner was not there.

"He has gone to Drownville," said my fellow detective; "he went last night."

"To Drownville!"

I was seriously annoyed. Did Mr. Clenner distrust the accuracy of my reports? Or did he imagine that I was unable to institute a thorough and complete investigation of the premises?

"It's very strange," I mused aloud.

Jones laughed.

"Well," he said, "you know Mr. Clenner has a way of doing strange things. Depend upon it, he has good reasons for his conduct."

I was sitting at my desk, two days subsequently, when the door glided noiselessly open and Mr. Clenner himself entered.

"You are back again, sir? What luck?"

"The best."

"You don't mean to say you've got him?"

"I do mean to say it. Edward Meredith, I knew I could not be so entirely mistaken. Perley Matteson is in the next room—half an hour from now he will be in prison."

I felt myself alternately flush and grow pale.

"Where did you apprehend him?"

"At home in his mother's house."

"But——"

"He was there all the time you remained there."

Ned, my boy, you've made a blunder for once; don't let it happen again."

"What do you mean, sir?"

For reply he opened the door of the private inner apartment, his own special sanctum. A slight boyish figure leaned against the window smoking a cigarette, with black curls tossed back from a marble white brow, and brilliant eyes. He mockingly inclined his head as I stared at him, with a motion not entirely unfamiliar to me.

"Clara Matteson!"

"Yes," he said, in a soft, sarcastic voice. "Clara Matteson, or Perley Matteson, or whatever you choose to call me. Many thanks for your politeness, Detective Meredith; and if you would like another lock of hair——"

I turned away, burning scarlet, while Mr. Clenner closed the door.

"Never mind, my boy, it will be a good lesson

to you," he said, laughing. "He makes a very pretty girl, but I am not at all susceptible!"

What a fool I had been! I had lost the reward—fallen in the estimation of my fellow-officers—and behaved like a brute to poor Kitty—and all for what?

I went to Kitty and told her the whole story, and to my surprise the dear, faithful little creature loved me just as well as ever.

"I won't be jealous of Perley Matteson, Edward," she said, smiling, "whatever I might be of his sister! And, dearest, don't be discouraged. I'll wait as long as you please, and you will be second Mr. Clenner yet!"

She was determined to look on the bright side of things, this little Kitty of mine. But I felt the mortification none the less keenly, although, as Mr. Clenner said, it would undoubtedly prove a good lesson to me.

Perley Matteson's girlish beauty is eclipsed in prison now—nor do I pity him! The stake for which he played was high—and he lost!

A. R.

PACETIE.

A BIG FAMILY.—A father of three sons and five daughters was asked what family he had. The answer was "I have three sons, and they have each five sisters." "Mercy," replied the interrogator, "sic a family ye maun have."

"I WILL not strike thee, bad man," said a Quaker one day, "but I will let this billet of wood fall on thee!" And at that precise moment the "bad man" was floored by the weight of the walking-stick that the Quaker was known to carry.

THE MEMORY MAN.—Feinagle taught a system of artificial memory—mnemotechnics. One day a friend of his found a waiter in a coffee-room laughing heartily. On asking the cause of his mirth the fellow replied: "I can't help it, sir; it's raining hard and that 'ere memory-man has gone and forgotten his umbrella."

Too BAD.—In Professor Phelps's book entitled "The Still Hour" occurs the following sentence: "The stillness of this hour is the stillness of a dead calm at sea." Imagine the reverend author's terror when he found, after several hundred copies had been printed, that "calm" was made by the types to read "clam!"

A LABOUR OF LOVE.—A California story tells of a man who resolved to quit drinking, and went to a notary to get him to draw up an affidavit to that effect. The document was drawn, read and proved; the party held up his hand and murmured the usual "seal me." It was properly sealed and delivered. "What's to pay?" asked the pledger. "To pay!" exclaimed the party, "nothing, of course—this is a labour of love." "Nothing to pay?" returned the grateful but very forgetful affiant. "You're a brick. Let's take a drink."

FOND OF SHOOTING.—A bishop, who was fond of shooting, in one of his excursions met with a friend's gamekeeper, whom he sharply reproved for inattention to his religious duties, exhorting him tremulously to "go to church and read his Bible." The keeper, in angry mood, responded, "Why, I do read my Bible, sir, but I don't find in it any mention of the apostles going a shooting." "No, my good man, you are right," said the bishop; "the shooting was very bad in Palestine, so they went fishing instead."

AN ACUTE LUNATIC.—A country newspaper reports a conversation between a gamekeeper and an inmate of a lunatic asylum at Neath, the two meeting on the lawn in front of the building. Inmate: "Good-morning to you; that's a fine horse you have—pray what is he worth?" Gamekeeper: "This horse cost my master 604." Inmate: "And what may that gun have cost which you have?" Gamekeeper: "This is one of Westley Richards's, and consequently is expensive; it cost 204." Inmate: "And what are these dogs worth?" Gamekeeper: "These dogs are worth about 204." Inmate: "And what have you in that basket?" Gamekeeper: "A snipe!" Inmate: "And what is that worth?" Gamekeeper: "I should think it's worth sixpence." Inmate: "Well, I should recommend you to drive off as fast as you can, for if our governor were to know that any man expends 1004 to procure a sixpenny bird, he would immediately seize him and put him in his asylum."

IRISH WRIT.—Two Irishmen met one morning. One was very suddy and ragged, with a very bad hat, and was evidently in search of his morning bitters. The other was attired in shining broad-cloth, and sported a costly beaver. After exchanging a greeting and some conversation the latter took out a handsome gold watch to compare his time with that of the big clock on the City Hall. "It's a nice

watch ye have there," says number one. "Be jabbers," says number two, pulling up his shirt collar, "an' ye may believe that; but if I'd ha' behaved myself iver since I come over I'd be a walkin' round with the twin clock in my pocket to-day."

LORD NORBURY accidentally met Counsellor Spear, who had recently purchased a horse, and was asked by his lordship how he approved of the animal. "Not at all, my lord," replied the barrister; "for he trots very high, and is very uneasy." "Then," replied the judge, "if you have not yet named him, I would advise you to call him Shakespear."

A TELL-TALE.—An old lady living on one of the telegraph lines observed some workmen digging a hole near her door; she inquired what it was for. "To put a post in for the telegraph," was the answer. Wild with fury and affright, she seized her bonnet and ran off to her next neighbour with the news. "What do you think?" she exclaimed, in breathless haste; "they're a settin' up that cursed paragraph right agin my door; and now I reckon a body can't spank a child, or scold a husband, or chat with a neighbour, but that plaguy thing 'll be a blabbin' it all over creation. I won't stand it! I'll move right away where there ain't none of them ornamental fixtures!"

A BAD JOKE.—A witicism by a distinguished member of the bar, Serjeant B—, is going the rounds of the clubs. Serjeant B— and Serjeant M— met recently in the robing-room of Westminster, when the latter bitterly complained of the amount of work with which he was saddled, declaring that it was killing him. "Why, then," said B—, "do you work so hard? Give up some of your practice—you have made a lot of money, you know." "Yes," replied M—, "but I have got into a groove, and cannot get out of it." "A groove!" retorted B—; "yes, a groove of love of money. But remember, M—, you cannot take your money with you when you die, and if you could in your case it would be useless, for it would be melted in a minute or two."

A BEAUTIFUL Parisian girl called on a lawyer noted for his sagacity, to learn how she could compel a certain gentleman, with whom she had fallen in love, to marry her whether or not. "You must contrive to remain alone with him, mademoiselle, three times, and fifteen minutes each time, and have good proof of the fact," said the lawyer. "Very well, monsieur," replied the girl. She called twice more on the lawyer, remaining alone with him about twenty minutes on each occasion, and at the close of the last interview informed the astonished man that he was the person she was after, and that she had her witnesses all on hand in the entry. He married her and was happy.

BAROMETRICAL.—Draper: "Light summer dress? Yes, m'm. Soid a great many the last few days, m'm, the weather havin' risen from a French merino to a grenadine!"—Punch.

CREATING A HORSEHAUGH.—"Mr. Chaplin ain't a going to devote twelve thousand pound of 'Ermit's' winnings to restorin' Lincoln Cathedral," said a stable-boy to a groom. "If he bestowed it anyhow, in course what he won by a 'oss he'd give to a 'ospital."—Punch.

A DAY IN A CAVE.—Mr. Punch never touches on private affairs. But when a political party, strong enough to stop a Reform Bill, sets up a newspaper to support its own principles, and then lets the newspaper collapse, and does not pay the workers, the "situation" becomes one for public comment. The only good plea that we have yet heard is that the original Cave of Adullam was composed of "every-one that was in debt," and that it would therefore be out of keeping to pay. But a rule of taste should not dominate the golden rule.—Punch.

LIKE THEIR ASSURANCE.—We believe there is no foundation for the rumour that a well-known office has refused to insure Mr. Diarmid's life, on the ground that it was quite impossible to make out his policy.—Fun.

THE LATEST THING ABOUT THE DERRY.—We are surprised that the success of Hermit should have been so little expected. Everybody ought to have been prepared to see Mr. Chaplin's horse in the van.—Fun.

TIN! TIN! TIN!—For the honour of England, gentlemen, for the honour of England! The Belgians behaved awfully well to our Volunteers. Shall we repay them with less worthy hospitality? Echo answers that she will see us blowed first, and then she won't. Come, send in your subscriptions to No. 8, St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, where "The Belgian Reception Committee" sits in the chairs of the English Langue of the order of St. John of Jerusalem. St. Martin reminds us of the good things the Belgians made us swallow, Trafalgar re-

minds us that "England expects every man to do his duty," and Jerusalem reminds us that folks who can subscribe and don't may go to Jericho.—Punch.

THE LATEST FROM SOUTH KENSINGTON.

We have been favoured with a peep at the proposed programme of performances at the Hall of Arts and Science. Among the chief features will be found the following:

Science.

The Cole-fields of Industry, with Diagrams. By Mr. Felix Summerley.

The Construction of Boilers, with Models. By a Student of the School of Art.

A Survey of the Mountains of the Moon. By the Author of "Mumbo-Jumbo."

On the Cultivation of the Cole-wort (*Brassica*). By a Member of the Royal Horticultural Society.

The Origin and Spread of Cole-era in South Kensington. By an M.D.

Art.

Architecture as an Ornamental Art. By an Engineer Officer.

How to Draw a Salary without Trouble, with Practical Illustrations. By a Secretary and Commissioner.

On the Engravings and Redgravings. By a Royal Academician.

The Social Aspects of Paris, with a Comparison of French Frog-eating and British Toad-eating. By a Commissioner.

The British Cold-clipper; or, National Portrait Gallery of Boring-Beetles. By the Beadle of the Boilers.

We believe that the entertainments will be varied occasionally by performances on the high horse and low rope, graining through the collar of the Order, by a C.B., and other elevating and intellectual amusements.—Fun.

PARLIAMENTARY.—The young fruit has been terribly cut off by frost in the South of England—in fact, in some divisions there has recently been a good deal of pearling-off.—Fun.

"VERY OLD, AND CURIOUS"

Host: "Now, how do you like that port?"

Guest: "Humph—well—why, not much!"

Host: "There now! I always thought you judges of wine were humbugs. You remember the port you tasted when you were here a month or two ago? You said it was splendid! Well, that's the very same bottle that was decanted for you then!"—Fun.

CROPS OF 1897.

It is only a little more than a century ago that England was a wheat-exporting country. The home growth was not only enough for the population but allowed of an export which was naturally looked upon as a proof of prosperity. A great change has now come over the scene; we not only do not export, but require a large importation in addition to our own home supply. No one will say that this is a sign of agricultural decrepitude, even if the former period of export was considered favourable. In part the change is due to a great increase of population, and although the area of acreage under cultivation has also increased it has not been in the same ratio.

The whole quantity of wheat annually required for home consumption has been estimated at about 12,000,000 quarters, the difference being supplied from other countries. If this is the result of the increase of population up to this point it must be evident that even to keep up our home supply a larger area must be brought under cultivation, for if not we become more and more dependant on others, a position that cannot be looked upon with entire satisfaction; and not only ought a larger area to be maintained, but the increase of produce per acre becomes a matter of serious consideration. At present the average under wheat has been put at about 5,000,000 acres, and the average produce of which has been under three quarters per acre; the question then is has the limit been reached? It is under this aspect that high farming becomes a matter of national importance. Now it is well known that with improved systems of farming, a higher average than three quarters has been annually obtained, and that under the varying vicissitudes of our climate, as at Loos Weeden and elsewhere, and the area of cultivation may no doubt be extended, but under any circumstances we can hardly expect to keep pace with an ever-growing population. The subject deserves consideration, for we know not how soon a general convulsion may throw us upon our own resources, a prospect which would not be satisfactory.

The prospect of the season is assuming a somewhat gloomy aspect. The reports of the crops from various parts of the country are anything but favourable. The wheat has suffered from the deprivations of the grub to the extent, in some cases of,

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nearly one-quarter of the crop. Turnips have been sown twice or thrice; rain has descended in unusual quantities, to the manifest detriment of the growing crops, and, to crown all, the cattle plague has appeared again. These things are not cheering, coming as they do upon a bad harvest, and upon heavy losses from the scourge of the cattle disease, and if we look abroad for relief in the future there is nothing very encouraging, for one of our great sources of supply is, for the present at all events, virtually cut off from us, so that there are no shipments for this country, and it pays even to import thither the crops from California. If we look across to France the spring has not been favourable, so that instead of hoping for any supplement to our own wants, as we have usually relied upon, that country will come into the market as a competitor for the first necessary of life. It is true that we have still the Baltic and Black Sea, and with improved appliances of carriage for shipment there may yet be sufficient to prevent any farther rise in price, which would indeed be a calamity.

STATISTICS.

MINING.—The cost of coal in human life in England in five years was, from 1856 to 1860, 5,083 lives for 881,000,000 tons; from 1861 to 1865, 4,627 lives for 468,500,000 tons.

BIRTH AND DEATH RATE OF THE WORLD.—Statisticians have calculated that if the population of the world amounts to between 1,200 and 1,300 million persons, the number of deaths in a year would be about 52 millions. Assuming the correctness of this calculation, the deaths each day would be nearly 83,000; 3,600 per hour, 60 per minute, and thus every second would carry into eternity one human life from one part of the world or another. But reproduction asserts its superior power; for, on calculating the probable annual births on the globe, the result shows that whereas 60 persons die per minute, 70 children are born, and thus the increase of the population is kept up.

COUNTY RATES.—By a Parliamentary return issued recently, remarks the *Globe*, we perceive that the amount levied for the county rate, &c., was—in Bedford, in 1859, 3,486*l.*, in 1865, 6,898*l.*; Berks, 1859, 12,772*l.*, 1865, 14,246*l.*; Cambridge, 1859, 11,817*l.*; Isle of Ely, 3,168*l.*, 1865, 2,772*l.*; Chester, 1859, 40,186*l.*, 1865, 28,182*l.*; Cornwall, 1860, 15,588*l.*, 1866, 21,166*l.*; Cumberland, 1859, 10,212*l.*, 1865, 8,866*l.*; Derby, 1859, 18,324*l.*, 1865, 16,053*l.*; Devon, 1860, 11,525*l.*, 1866, 10,604*l.*; Dorset, 1859, 10,070*l.*, 1865, 9,240*l.*; Durham, 1859, 24,866*l.*, 1865, 27,936*l.*; Essex, 1859, 12,178*l.*, 1865, 11,818*l.*; Gloucester, 1859, 23,315*l.*, 1865, 24,475*l.*; Hereford, 1860, 14,465*l.*, 1866, 15,377*l.*; Hertford, 1859, 8,082*l.*, 1866, 7,701*l.*; Huntingdon, 1857, 9,466*l.*, 1865, 7,484*l.*; Kent, 1859, 23,944*l.*, other receipts, 15,075*l.*, 1865, 24,536*l.*, other receipts, 13,303*l.*; Lancaster, 1859, 11,275*l.*, other receipts, 59,406*l.*, 1865, 135,097*l.*, other receipts, 116,707*l.*; Leicester, 1859, 10,618*l.*, 1865, 9,518*l.*, &c. The total number of head of cattle was—in counties of England, 3,069,953; in metropolitan police district, 44,483; and in Wales, 547,234.

A WINDFALL FOR THE VICEROY OF EGYPT.—A search in the garden of an ancient Coptic convent is said to have brought to light a treasure consisting partly of ingots and partly of very ancient gold pieces rather larger than Napoleons, of a total value represented as about 50 millions of francs. The discovery having been telegraphed to Ras-el-Tin, the Viceroy left to investigate the matter in person. Can it be the cash-box of Amenopolis XXXVII., which that monarch is said to have lost on a journey, according to inscriptions on the obelisk of Luxor? As curious and unlikely a discovery of a lost and advertised valuable of ancient times occurred in England not long ago.

A RAFT VOYAGE TO EUROPE.—The successful voyage across the Atlantic by the Red, White, and Blue, and the yachts in the ocean race, has induced another adventurer to attempt the transit. The journey is to be undertaken on one of Perry's Monitor rafts, now on exhibition in New York city. This raft is constructed of three air-tight cylinders, encased in heavy Russia duck cloth, each 25 ft. in length by 12½ ft. wide. When blown up these bags are connected by a light framework, which also forms the deck. The raft is schooner-rigged, with a lug sail forward, main sail aft, and jib. Cabin there is none, the only protection for the passengers being a small waterproof tent rigged amidships. Captain Mike, with two companions constitute the complement of men, and the expedition is to start about the middle of the present month, bound for Paris and the Exhibition. The raft draws but 7 in. of water, and with a fair wind the inventor states

that her speed will be from twenty to thirty knots per hour. As a surf-boat the claims of this raft were well tested before the Commissioners of the Life-saving Inventions, at Long Branch. Its buoyant capacity is estimated at 14,000 lb., or it will float 585 people on deck and clinging to its sides. The raft is compact and can be stored, wrapped in a tarpaulin, in a space 13 ft. by 20 in., and can be inflated and launched ready for use in six minutes.

I WONDER IF SHE CARES FOR ME.

I LOVE a maiden sweet and fair,
With azure eyes and auburn hair,
First, like an angel, pure and bright,
She dawned upon my raptured sight!
I've loved her long, I've loved her dear—
It seems like heaven when she is near;
And when her charming face I see
I wonder if she cares for me.

I watch her form across the way,
And think her fairer every day;
I guard her in her morning walk,
And listen to her girlish talk;
And when upon her brow of snow
I see the blushes come and go,
Like rosy clouds, so warm and free,
I wonder if she cares for me.

Sometimes I'm just upon the brink
Of telling her the thoughts I think—
Of all my love and deep despair—
When something whispers, "Never dare!"
And so I worship her afar,
Live some heaven-born and radiant star;
Yet, when that tell-tale blush I see
I wonder if she cares for me.

Thus shall I let the hours pass by,
Until some braver man than I
Shall win the prize, and wear it too?
No! surely that would never do!
I'll try—O Cupid, grant me this!—
A loving answer—ah, 'tis, "Yes!"
My heart leaps up—our loves agree—
And now I know she cares for me!

M. A. K.

GEMS.

THE humble man requests a favour as though he were unworthy to receive it; but the proud man asks for a favour in the same tone as he were granting one.

PARENTAL NEGLECT.

The twig was bent—and so the tree inclined;
The wax impressed portrays the seal designed.
Blame not the twig, which from some dire neglect
Hath crooked grown, which else might be erect;
Blame not the wax, which, faithful to the seal,
Doth only some unsightly stamp reveal;
Charge not thy child with folly all thy own,
Nor make the sinless for thy sin atone.

MODESTY.—Nothing is more amiable than true modesty, and nothing more contemptible than that which is false; the one guards virtue, the other betrays it. True modesty is ashamed to do anything that is repugnant to right reason; false modesty is ashamed to do anything that is opposite to the humour of those with whom the party converses. True modesty avoids everything that is criminal; false modesty everything that is unfashionable; the latter is only a general, undetermined instinct, the former is that instinct limited and circumscribed by the rules of prudence and religion.

THE ST. PETERSBURG AND MOSCOW RAILWAY.

—It is the intention of the Russian Government to sell the St. Petersburg and Moscow Railway. The capital expended upon the line, including the amount paid for rolling stock, is about 12,000,000*l.*, but the return realized upon this outlay has been at the rate of nearly eight per cent. per annum; and as the traffic is expected to increase upon the completion of the lines now in progress it is believed that the sale of the undertaking will produce 16,000,000*l.* to the Russian Treasury. During the last six years the assistance afforded by the Russian Government to the construction of railways in the territories under its control has been about 13,000,000*l.*

NEW SUSPENSION BRIDGE AT NIAGARA FALLS.

—The preliminaries are so far completed that the building of a suspension bridge over the Niagara at this place may be regarded as certain, and that within a few months. Some trouble has been experienced with the Canadian Government, but this has all been happily settled through the agency of John T. Bush and Hollis White, two of the directors of the Bridge Company, who visited the Canadian

capital for that purpose. The stockholders held a meeting at this place, and organized by choosing the following board of directors:—John T. Bush, Alexander B. Williams, Hollis White, Delos De Wolfe, and Vivian W. Smith. The board subsequently organized by choosing John T. Bush, president; Hollis White, vice-president; Delos De Wolfe, treasurer; Vivian W. Smith, secretary. They will at once commence the work; in fact, we learn that work has already been begun in setting the timber necessary for the temporary towers. The bridge will have its landing on one side near the gas-works; on the Canadian side a short distance below the Clifton House, where real estate has been purchased of the Canadian Government for that purpose. The new bridge will be considerably longer than its neighbour below, but will be erected in the most secure and substantial manner. Of course when completed it will furnish a more convenient passage for the thousands of pleasure-seekers who visit this place and wish to view the Falls from both sides. It is contemplated to have the bridge erected this summer.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

WORMS IN A LAWN.—Place a peck of unslacked lime in a tub, pour over it thirty gallons of water, and, after stirring it well up, let the whole stand forty-eight hours, and with a rose watering-pot give the lawn a thorough soaking with the clear lime water. It will bring the worms to the surface, and they may then be swept up and cleared away. The lime water is best applied in showery weather, and it may be necessary to repeat the watering.

PRESERVATION OF EGGS.—The following plan has been successfully tried for the preservation of eggs: Melt together 4 oz. of beeswax and 8 oz. of warm olive oil; in this put the tip of the finger and anoint the eggs all around. The oil will immediately be absorbed by the shell, and the pores filled up with the wax. If kept in a cool place the eggs will be good after a very long period. The employment of wax and olive oil is far superior to the use of butter, lard, or any other animal fat for closing the pores of the shells.

LUCINE or gluten for fastening colours, as a substitute for whites of eggs, is dissolved in alkaline or acid solutions. The best acid is acetic, the best alkali, lime dissolved in sugared water or ammonia. The difficulty is to get a sufficient proportion of the gluten incorporated with the colouring matter. To effect this, soaked gluten is mixed with ammonia or exposed to its vapour, and after a few days will liquify and assume the consistence of a good thickener of colours. With ammonia and acetate of lime the compound becomes capable of resisting soap.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ATTAR OF ROSES.—It requires ten thousand roses to make one ounce of the attar.

THERE are 3,241 newspapers published in Europe in the German language.

It is currently reported that Krupp has offered his monster cannon as a present to the King of Prussia. It is valued at about 20,000*l.*

Mr. G. PRABODY has consented to permit the portrait of the Queen presented to him to be exhibited in Philadelphia, the proceeds to be devoted to charitable objects.

In the year 1866 no less than 37,643 wills were searched for and examined, if found, at Doctors' Commons. The fees, 1*s.* for each will, amounted to 1,882*3s.*

MR. JEFFERSON DAVIS.—It is understood to be the purpose of Mr. Jefferson Davis to set to work writing a book—giving a history of the secession movement, the Southern struggle, and his own adventures from December, 1860, to May, 1867.

PORTRAIT OF ORPIN.—The Director of the National Gallery has purchased, for 325*l.*, at Messrs. Christie, Manson & Woods' auction of the effects of the late J. Wiltshire, Esq., of Shockerwick Park, the portrait, by Gainsborough, of Orpin, parish clerk of Bradford-on-Avon.

THE venerable Auber recently traversed the whole of the Paris Exhibition on foot. As soon as the presence of the distinguished composer became known in the vicinity of musical instruments, whether in Prussia, England, America, or France, the pianos gave forth either an air from the "Muette," or the overture to the "Domino," or the prayer in "Fra Diavolo," or a chorus from "Lestocq," &c., so that M. Auber might almost have supposed that no other music but his own was played at the Exhibition.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. D. C.—St. Paul's without doubt.

J. H. C.—The Christian name you mention should be spelt "Lustie."

T. W. C.—To make furniture polish take 2 oz. of white wax, 1 gill of turpentine, melt the wax and gradually mix it in the turpentine.

LOUISA S.—The City of London Rifle Volunteers wear the uniform you mention. The uniform of the Victoria is invaluable green.

A HOUSEWIFE.—To clean light silk mix sifted stale bread crumbs with powder blue, and rub it thoroughly all over, then shake the silk, and dust it off with clean soft cloths.

MARY ANN E.—We think you can compel the father to support the child. Your better course, however, would be to apply at once to a police magistrate.

J. J.—A good cement for stopping cracks in jars may be made as follows: Take equal quantities of white lead and white sand, and as much oil as will make it of the consistency of putty; in a few weeks it will become as hard as stone.

PLANT TOM.—The so-called Ancient Order is a benefit society like that of the "Foresters" and "Odd Fellows;" they derived their name from the ancient Pagan priests of Britain. 2. Handwriting rather good.

ALEXANDER.—We know of no Earl of Belmont in the English peerage. There is an Earl of Belmont, who sits in the House of Lords as an Irish representative peer. His lordship was born in 1835, and elected in the year 1857.

JASPER.—Monochord is an instrument consisting of a single string (hence its name) stretched over two bridges, standing one at each end of a graduated scale, employed to measure the variety and proportions of musical sounds.

CLAUDE.—The pure Greek for "The brothers" is *oi adelphoi*, but it has been anglicized into Adelphi, so that in giving a boat, street, or building, the Greek name equivalent to "The Brothers" it is correct to call it "Adelphi."

A. H.—1. The great philanthropist you mention is now in America. 2. The contagion, according to medical authority, is generally greatest when the patient is recovering; but how long it continues depends upon so many different causes it is impossible to state any time.

ELLA.—A good way to clean marble is to mix some pumice-stone finely powdered into a paste with vinegar; let it stand for two hours, then rub it over the marble, and let it dry on; then wash it off with clean water, and dry it with soft linen.

JOSEPHINE.—Gavot is a dance consisting of two light lively strains in common time, each being played twice; the first usually contains four or eight bars, and the second eight or twelve, and sometimes more. The first strain should close in the dominant or fifth of the key; it is not a gavot but a *rondeau* if it end in the tonic or key note.

J. B.—To make peppermint cordial take 13 gallons of rectified spirit, one in five under hydrometer proof, 12 lbs. of loaf sugar, 1 pint of spirits of wine that will fire gunpowder, 15 pennyweights of oil of peppermint, and as much water as will fill up the cask, which should be set on end; after the whole has been well mixed this will make 20 gallons.

THOMAS.—The most ancient of all British coins is the penny; it was introduced by the Saxons, amongst whom it was the only current coin; it was at first composed of silver, and minted with a cross so deeply as to enable it to be broken into halves and quarters; hence the terms of half-penny and fourth-thing or farthing.

VIVIAN.—Chronology is formed from two Greek words, *chronos*, signifying time, and *logos*, a discourse. It is the science or doctrine of time, as regards history, whether sacred or profane. The object of this science is, therefore, to ascertain and regulate the various epochs, and other periods mentioned in history, so that the revolutions of nations, and other remarkable events, may be truly stated.

MATILDA.—Dress children warmly, and have flannel next their skin during the whole year. It is bad to allow a child to have bare arms and legs, even in summer. The circulation should be invited to the extremities; warmth does that, cold repels it; sufficient happy substantial food, and ripe fruits, with joyous out-door exercise, would save millions of children annually.

ANTHONY HOLDEN.—To make an Afghan harp, let a box of thin deal be made of a length the same as that of the window in which it is to be placed, four or five inches in depth, and five or six in width; glue on it at the extremities of the top two pieces of oak, about half an inch high, and a quarter of an inch thick, to serve as bridges for the strings; and inside, at each end, glue two pieces of beech, about one inch square, and of length equal to the width of the boxes which are to hold the pegs; into one of these bridges fix as many pegs as there are to be strings, then string the instrument

with small catgut, fixing one end of them, and twisting the other round the opposite, these strings must not be drawn tight; to procure proper passage for the wind a thin board, supported by four pegs is placed over the strings, about three inches from the sounding-board. The instrument must be exposed to the wind, at a window partly open, and either the door of the room or an opposite window should be open.

ROBERT.—Never go into a sick-room while in a perspiration, if a continuance there be requisite, for the moment the body becomes cold it is in a state likely to absorb the infection, and receive the disease. On visiting an invalid stand where the air passes from the door or window to the bed of the diseased, but not between the person infected and any fire that may be in the room, as the heat of the fire would draw the infectious vapour in that direction.

AMELIA.—Recreation is to the mind like a second creation, when weariness has almost destroyed our spirits; it imbues the soul with fresh vigour, which otherwise from continual exertion must and would droop; and how happy is he who can turn from the anxieties of his daily duties and enjoy such relaxation in the bosom of his family. Its very simplicity imparts to it an irresistible charm, and answers to a yearning in our nature; which, if that be wanting, is the sure sign of a morbid temperament.

PAULINE.—Nothing in this life is all dark; there cannot be a picture without its bright spots, and the steady contemplation of what is bright in others has a reflex influence upon the beholder; it produces what it reflects—nay, it seems to leave an impress upon the countenance. The features, instead of having a dark and gloomy aspect, become open, serene, and sunny; the woman who has such a face is beautiful; her beauty varies not with the features, and changes not with years.

LITTLE THINGS.

It is the little things of life
That mightiest ends achieve;
Not the stupendous thoughts that minds
Of mighty men conceive.
Not by the meteoric blaze,
But by the unquenched radiance
From myriad star gems showne.
Genius in its outshining light
Has shone from shore to shore,
But universal common sense
Of man has done much more.
Yes, single truths and single thoughts
Combined are what comprise
The wealth of human excellence,
To make earth's mortals wise.
The thunderbolts of great reform,
Though hurled from mighty hands,
Are forged by many firesides dim,
In this and other lands.
And though the brilliant names alone
Are won in verse and song,
The credit of earth's greatest truths
To all mankind belong.
Forget the past, the present hour
Is all that is to be won;
Resolve its moments, speeding fast,
Shall find new duties done.
Fill up thy life with little acts
Of love; they e'er shall shine.
Their influence never shall be lost—
The satisfaction thine.

A. T.

MILLY, twenty-five, stout, and domesticated. Respondent must be about thirty.

FRANK, 5 ft 10 in. in height, fair, blue eyes, and 150L per annum. (Handwriting very good.)

W. M., with some private property. Respondent must be respectable, well educated, and about middle age.

C. G., twenty, fair, medium height, and good tempered. Respondent must be tall and dark.

ANNIE, tall, fair, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be dark, and not over thirty.

EMMA and ANNIE, "Emma," twenty-one. "Annie," nineteen. Respondents must be respectable and steady.

LAURA, nineteen, 5 ft 3 in. in height, dark hair and eyes, no fortune, but domesticated. Respondent must be tall, gentlemanly, and not more than twenty-four.

MINNIE, eighteen, medium height, light hair and eyes, and can play and sing. Respondent must be dark, gentlemanly, and about twenty-five. (Handwriting rather good.)

MILLY W., eighteen, 5 ft 2 in. in height, fair, light blue eyes, and hair with a golden tint, but no fortune; a dark gentleman preferred.

MAY, twenty-two, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, pretty, and with money. Respondent must be tall and dark; money no object.

D. C. R., twenty-three, 5 ft 10 in. in height, dark, good looking, and an engineer on board a steamship. Respondent must not be over twenty-three, and good looking.

HORACE W., tall, fair, well educated, and a clerk, with a salary of 90L per annum. Respondent must be dark, lady-like, with blue eyes, rather tall, and a few pounds at her command.

W. W., thirty, 5 ft 6 in. in height, dark hair and moustache, and a good income. Respondent must be about thirty, good looking, accomplished, and well educated, with an income of about 200L per annum.

RED ROSE and WHITE ROSE. "Red Rose," 5 ft 2 in., dark hair, light blue eyes, and very pretty. "White Rose," 5 ft 2 in., light hair, blue eyes, and very pretty. Respondents must be tall, dark, and good looking; tradesmen preferred.

LOVELY TOM, 5 ft 9 in. in height, light curly hair, good looking, a clerk in an office in the country, has no fortune, but hopes by steady and temperate habits to work his way up in the world. Respondent need not have money, but must be in the same station of life.

MARIA.—There are too many persons in this world who spend their lives in it as they would were they shut up in a dungeon; everything to them seems gloomy and forbidding. From day to day they go mourning and complaining that they have so little, and are constantly anxious lest they should lose what little they have. They look upon the dark

side, therefore they can never enjoy the good that is present for the evil that may come; this is not religion, for that makes the heart cheerful; the road we travel is often hard and uneven, but with a heart to praise God for His mercies we may walk therein with comfort, and arrive at the end of our journey in peace.

A SUNSHINE.—1. To remove freckles, take one pint of benzoin, 1 pint of tincture of tolu, 1 oz. of oil of rosemary, mix well together; put a teaspoonful into a gill of water, dip a towel in it and rub the face night and morning. 2. The black spots you speak of in the skin arise only we believe will remove. The only method is to press them out with the thumb and finger, and then apply a little cold cream. 3. Violet powder, if pure, is not injurious to the skin, but it is difficult to procure unadulterated.

G. M. admits that she has got into an awful fix by a foolish and unadvisable indulgence in a flirtation. G. M. adds she has two lovers, one four years her junior, the other some years her senior. She confesses her love for the younger. Under these circumstances she asks if she can discard the junior for the senior. Can she hesitate for a moment? Has not her own heart in part already decided for her? Certainly we are of opinion that four years should not count in the way of your happiness, that is, provided you know what few flirts do know—the real direction in which their happiness lies. (Handwriting good and ladylike.)

ALBERT and AUGUSTUS. "Albert," twenty-three, fair, 5 ft 11 in., income 120L. "Augustus," twenty-one, dark, 5 ft 8 in., income 125L.

H. O. H., nineteen, 5 ft 9 in. in height, dark hair, blue eyes, good tempered, and in the Royal Artillery. Respondent must not be more than eighteen.

LOVELY JACK, between eighteen and nineteen, 5 ft 3 in. in height, dark blue eyes, and brown hair. Respondent must be about fifteen or sixteen, 5 ft., and pretty.

TILLEY and SUSIE. "Tilley" (dark), and "Susie" (fair) would make loving wives. Respondents must be kind and good tempered.

CAROLINE, twenty-one, 5 ft 1 in., dark hair and eyes, and a farmer's daughter. Respondent must be about her own age, dark, and good tempered; would prefer a sailor.

VIOLET, nineteen, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, fair, with an income of 50L per annum, and fifty more at the death of an uncle. Respondent must be dark, and belong to the Church of England.

MINNIE B. and LAURA. "Minnie B.," eighteen, tall, lady-like, fair hair, hazel eyes, domesticated, and expects a little money. "Laura," nineteen, tall and dark brown hair and eyes. Respondents must be tall and dark; tradesmen preferred.

ALICE, HELENA, and STEPHANIE. "Alice," nineteen, tall, dark, fond of home; "Helena," eighteen, tall, fair, rather plain, fond of home and steady; "Stephanie," twenty, short, stout, brown hair, hazel eyes, income 50L per annum. Respondents must be tall, with good incomes.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

J. W. W. is responded to by—"M. D. H.," dark, good tempered, and considered good looking.

TOM and HARRY by—"Caroline" and "Kitty." "Caroline," nineteen, 5 ft 3 in. in height, dark, and good looking.

"Kitty," eighteen, 5 ft 3 in. in height, fair, light blue eyes, brown hair; both are domesticated and fond of music; and "Carry A." and "Lizzie A.," sisters, "Carry," 5 ft 3 in., brown hair, hazel eyes. "Lizzie," 5 ft 4 in., dark brown hair and blue eyes.

F. R. by—"Augusta," tall, fair, and of a good family, but not very good looking.

J. L. by—"Helen R.," nineteen, 5 ft 2 in. brown hair and eyes, considered good looking, and very fond of children.

H. V. by—"Blue-Eyed Alice," twenty, light complexion, blue eyes, golden wavy hair, and has a little money.

MARY by—"Thomas," a lover of home.

HARRY B. by—"Christie B.," thirty, 5 ft 7 in.; and "O. G.," a widow, without family, middle age, tall, dark, a milliner and dressmaker, very domesticated.

ROSS by—"Mont Blanc," thirty, tall, dark hair, and gentlemanly.

ROSE MORTIMER by—"A. B. C.," 5 ft 10 in., a mechanic, dark hair, whiskers and moustache, hazel eyes, and of steady and sober habits.

KATE, EMILY, and MILLY by—"F. Wilson."

MAGGIE by—"John R. W.," twenty-three, middle height, a baker, and respectably connected; and—"Tom Nival," twenty-five, dark complexion, good tempered, and some money on day.

DORINDA by—"R. C. P.," thirty, a widower, steady, in a respectable way of business, and has one child, a boy nearly two years old.

HELEN by—"H. P.," twenty-four, tall, dark, handsome, and has a good income.

EMMA by—"W. R. B.," a mechanic, nineteen, 5 ft 7 in. in height.

BERTHA by—"E. G. B."

JULIA H. by—"J. S.," twenty-four, 5 ft 7 in. in height, black hair and moustache, hazel eyes, sober, and fond of music.

FLORA C. by—"P. D.," who is in a respectable situation, with a good salary, and very fond of home comforts, which he thinks he cannot get without a wife.

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